

Swiss demand Iranian cooperation

BERNE (R) — Switzerland and Iran traded diplomatic protest notes this week in connection with Swiss requests for Iran's cooperation in investigations into the 1990 murder in Geneva of an Iranian dissident. A Swiss foreign ministry statement said a formal diplomatic protest was lodged with the Iranian ambassador to Switzerland on Friday in response to a similar note by Tehran two days ago. It said a representative of the Iranian embassy was summoned to the ministry and handed a protest note demanding that the Iranians cooperate in probing the death of dissident Kazem Rajavi who was gunned down near his Geneva home four years ago. "Iran has yet to react to Swiss requests for legal cooperation in the issue of the murder of Kazem Rajavi. Switzerland would now finally like to see a reaction," the note said. On Wednesday Iran protested to Switzerland at what it called "allegations made by Swiss officials against Iran." Swiss police and the justice ministry (have) alleged Iranian involvement in some terrorist acts," Iran's official news agency IRNA said, adding the Swiss ambassador was summoned to the foreign ministry in Tehran to receive a "strong protest."

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation
جوردان تايمز يومية مستقلة تصدرها المؤسسة الصحفية الأردنية "الراي"

Volume 18 Number 5519

AMMAN SUNDAY, JANUARY 23, 1994, SHA'BAN 11, 1414

Price: Jordan 150 Fils

King meets Bahrain minister and prince

WASHINGTON (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein Saturday received in Washington Tareq Al Muayyad, the Bahraini minister of information, and Sheikh Salman Ben Hamad Al Khalifa, son of the Bahraini crown prince. The King exchanged views with the Bahraini leaders about regional and international issues and discussed bilateral relations. Present at the audience were Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali, Royal court Chief Sharif Zaid Ben Staker and Marwan Al Qasem, King Hussein's political advisor.

Russia wants probation for Iraq

MOSCOW (AFP) — Russia has proposed to the U.N. Security Council that it fix a six-month probationary period after which it could lift an embargo on Iraqi oil sales if Baghdad abides by all U.N. resolutions, the Foreign Ministry said Saturday. The probationary period would last around six months and if "the honest and total respect of the resolutions by Iraq is verified by the Security Council then Russia would be ready to examine lifting the oil embargo," ITAR-TASS news agency quoted the ministry as saying in a statement. The statement stressed that Russia would insist on Iraq's full compliance with all the resolutions imposed by the council after Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in 1990. Moscow's position "strictly conformed with the conditions and criteria stipulated by the Security Council," the statement said.

Kurdish guerrillas kill 20 people

MARDIN, Turkey (AP) — Kurdish guerrillas killed 20 villagers in raids on two hamlets that apparently did not support the rebels' secessionist movement, reports said Saturday. Two insurgents were killed by the Turkish troops when they were trying to flee, the regional governor's office in Diyarbakir said. The guerrillas shot and killed four village guards, armed by the government, in the southeastern villages of Akyurek and Ormancik during the overnight attacks, according to the Anatolia news agency. They later hurled an explosive near a crowd of women and children in Ormancik, killing 16 people, Anatolia said.

FLN not to attend conference

ALGERIA (R) — Algeria's former ruling party, the National Liberation Front (FLN), said Saturday it will not participate in the country's national conference next week. The decision is a blow to the authorities, who are trying to organize the conference as a gathering of key political parties to find consensus on how to govern the country for the next three years.

BCCI court rejects release pleas

ABU DHABI (R) — An Abu Dhabi criminal court trying former Bank of Credit and Commerce International (BCCI) officials held since 1991 when the failed bank was shut, down rejected pleas on Saturday for their release and adjourned its hearings until Feb. 5, lawyers said.

Kuwaitis in Russia for arms talks

KUWAIT (R) — A Kuwaiti military delegation is visiting Moscow for preliminary talks on a possible purchase of BMP-2 and BMP-3 armoured personnel carriers (APC), a newspaper reported on Saturday. "A senior Kuwaiti military delegation arrived in Moscow to conduct preliminary talks with the Russian military leadership regarding some of the Russian weapons systems in which Kuwait expressed special interest," said Al Watan newspaper.

King says peace accord possible this year or next

Jordan supports Palestinian right to statehood; Geneva summit opened door for serious Syria-Israel talks; Clinton is committed to comprehensive peace

WASHINGTON (Agencies) — Arab countries could sign a peace treaty with Israel by the end of this year or in 1995, His Majesty King Hussein said here Saturday. "I believe that a solution is coming, and I believe that we will ratify a peace treaty probably at the end of this year or maybe next year," King Hussein said in an interview on Cable News Networks (CNN) Television.

King Hussein also said that Jordan had made its support for right of the Palestinian people to decide what they wanted for themselves as far back as 1974, when Jordan recognised the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.

The King, interviewed in Washington on CNN's "Evans and Novak" programme broadcast Saturday, also said Washington's continued interest and spirit of partnership were crucial for the success of the Middle East peace process.

King Hussein, who met with U.S. President Bill Clinton at the White House on Friday, described the president as a man of "great integrity" and determined to "do whatever he can... to bring about a just, honourable, lasting peace in our region."

The King described as very encouraging the outcome of the Jan. 16 summit in Geneva between President Clinton and Syrian President Hafez Al Assad and said he expected serious negotiations to begin between Syria and Israel.

The King said he expected the peace process to produce an agreement with Israel sometime this year or the next and that there was no turning back from the peace negotiations since "if it goes the other way, it would be the end for our entire region."

King Hussein said it was up to the Palestinian people to decide on how their leadership, the PLO, should behave and that he himself had "tried to advise (PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat), to the best of my ability, to try to realise that he has a changed role now."

The Monarch, who is on a private visit to the United States, said that the Arab boycott of foreign companies doing business in Israel was in the process of changing.

The King met with Vice-President Al Gore Saturday and was the guest of honour along with Her Majesty Queen Noor at a dinner hosted by Mr. Gore and his wife. Talks between the two leaders dealt with the peace process and Jordanian-American relations, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, reported.

Mr. Gore emphasised the "importance of the deep relationship between the U.S. and Jordan" and voiced appreciation of the King's continued efforts for peace in the Middle East as well as the democratisation of Jordan.

Following is a transcript of the King's interview on the CNN's "Evans and Novak" programme. The transcript was made available to the Jordan Times by the CNN's international desk at Atlanta, Georgia.

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U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher reads an eulogy at a memorial service held for the late Norwegian foreign minister, Johan Joergen Holst, in Oslo on Saturday (AFP photo)

Norway, world community bid emotional farewell to Holst

OSLO (Agencies) — The international community hailed the role of Norway's foreign minister in the Middle East peace process and urged further progress as more than 1,000 guests took part Saturday in an emotional funeral service for Johan Joergen Holst.

U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher, speaking on behalf of the international community, said that Mr. Holst had understood that change must come in the Middle East, not through symbols, but through pragmatic actions that would make a genuine difference in the day-to-day lives of people.

"History will record the essential part that Johan Holst — and Norway — played in helping to turn the Middle East from a cauldron of hostility into a cradle of hope," Mr. Christopher told the representatives of 60 countries including Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres.

Before the ceremony, Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat praised Mr. Holst as "the hero of the Oslo accord," which enabled Israel and the PLO to sign a historic autonomy deal in Washington last September.

Mr. Holst died last week aged 56 after suffering two strokes in a month.

"We have lost a man of profound insight and a unique capability to use his great fund of knowledge to discern new opportunities and find new solutions," Norwegian Prime Minister Gro Harlem Brundtland said in her eulogy.

Outside the cathedral hun-

Mr. Holst's white coffin was covered with white lilies. On each side of the coffin, facing each other, sat King Harald and members of the royal family and Marianne Heiberg, Mr. Holst's widow, his five children and other family members.

Her voice trembling with emotion, Ms. Brundtland said "it is now our task and our responsibility to include his (Holst's) work in our efforts."

"Holst was a dynamic force in the efforts to bring about peace and cooperation between nations. We have suffered a tragic loss," Ms. Brundtland added.

"To pay a tribute to his memory we will continue here the negotiations," Mr. Peres said before walking to the Oslo cathedral where bells rang and flags from scores of nations waved.

"I came to pay my respects to the memory of Johan Holst, who was very dear to our hearts and then to continue what was started here," said Mr. Peres. "We hope the Norwegian winds of peace will blow in our sails."

Mr. Arafat, who arrived later, also expressed hope, but said that he too had come mainly to honour Mr. Holst. "I lost a friend. A great friend. He is a hero for the peace agreement," said Mr. Arafat, who was accompanied by Yasser Abed Rabbo, a member of the PLO Executive Committee, and others when he arrived at the same downtown Oslo hotel housing Mr. Peres and Mr. Christopher.

Usually unarmed Norwegian police carried machine guns to guard the hotel.

Outside the cathedral hun-

dreds of Norwegians gathered in the cold morning hours to pay their respects to Mr. Holst, who enjoyed growing popular support during his eight months as foreign minister.

Flags flew at half-mast on all official buildings throughout Norway during the funeral ceremony.

Mr. Holst in April replaced Thorvald Stoltenberg, his brother-in-law, who was asked by the U.N. Security Council to take over as peace negotiator for the former Yugoslavia.

Mr. Holst was always very modest about his own part in the peace process, saying that he had just seized the baton that was passed to him.

"To do his memory justice, we must now grasp that baton and carry it, together, to peace," Mr. Christopher said.

Mr. Holst's five children, including four-year-old Edvard, each placed a rose on their father's coffin during the ceremony.

Among the pall bearers were Mr. Stoltenberg and Bjorn Tore Godal, who is expected to succeed Mr. Holst as foreign minister.

Norwegian state radio reported that Uri Savir, who led the Israeli delegation during the secret talks in Norway, and the PLO's Ahmad Qureia had met with Godal and Terje Rod Larsen, a key Norwegian mediator.

On Friday, the Norwegian state television broadcast previously unreleased footage of the peace accord being initiated in Oslo last year, including Mr. Qureia kissing the cheeks of his Israeli counterpart, Savir.

Arafat, Peres end Oslo talks, to meet in Davos

OSLO (Agencies) — Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat and Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres ended talks in Oslo on Saturday after obstacles to their historic peace accord, agreeing merely to meet again in Switzerland next week.

Before their meeting in Oslo, Peres and Mr. Arafat had expressed hopes of a breakthrough in the talks. "We are very serious in our attempts to achieve real peace in the Middle East," Mr. Peres said after the talks.

He said he believed the two sides could make major progress in the next round, in Davos, Switzerland on Sunday, Jan. 30. Mr. Arafat described the Oslo talks as "very fruitful," but both men declined to give details.

Mr. Arafat and Mr. Peres were in Norway to pay last respects to Norwegian Foreign Minister Johan Joergen Holst, the broker of the historic deal who died last week (see separate story). The two met in the building where the deal was secretly initiated in August.

"We hope that the next meeting between both of us next week in Switzerland will be a very important date to achieve what we are looking for," Mr. Arafat said.

The two leaders held talks for two hours aimed at jump-starting the stalled Palestinian self-rule negotiations.

Mr. Arafat and Mr. Peres said they had made progress. The leaders had "serious and sober" talks, according to Mr. Peres, while Mr. Arafat referred to the discussions as "fruitful."

The two leaders had promised to honour Mr. Holst's memory by moving the discussions forward.

Norway's acting Foreign Minister Bjorn Tore Godal was pleased with Saturday's talks.

"I'm more optimistic now than I was a few days ago," Mr. Godal said.

"Mr. Arafat and Mr. Peres have a deep personal commitment" to the discussions, he added.

Mr. Godal said he was confident that the talks would eventually succeed.

Mr. Arafat and the Palestinian delegation left the meeting for the airport to fly to Saudi Arabia, while Mr. Peres was due to leave Sunday morning.

Meanwhile, Mr. Godal said the Norwegian government will establish a foundation in memory of Mr. Holst, whose

Israelis wound 7 in Hebron

OCCUPIED HEBRON, West Bank (Agencies) — Israeli soldiers shot and wounded seven Palestinians in clashes in the occupied West Bank town of Hebron Saturday, witnesses said.

They said troops opened fire on a group of young men throwing stones and empty bottles at them, adding that one Palestinian was taken to hospital with serious wounds.

The army, which imposed a curfew on the area, said it was checking the report.

One of those hurt, Nasser Amer, 18, was in serious condition with a bullet in the stomach, Arab reporters said. In the occupied Gaza Strip, the Izzedine Al Qassam squad marked the end of its one-month moratorium on killing informers by shooting to death a suspected collaborator.

The body of Ashraf Khail, 25, was found Saturday near a garbage dump in Gaza City, with two bullets in the head. Khail had been kidnapped by masked men from his home two days earlier. Izzedine Al Qassam, which is linked to Hamas, claimed responsibility in a leaflet issued Saturday.

In December, Hamas had announced a moratorium on



Syrian women in tears were among the thousands of people who gathered in Damascus on Saturday for the funeral of Hafez Al Assad, the eldest son of President Hafez Al Assad (AFP)

Grieving Syrians lay to rest their leader's son

KORDAHA (Agencies) — Hafez Al Assad, the Syrian President's eldest son and possible successor, was buried Saturday at the family's hometown in northwest Syria amid frenzied displays of grief across the country.

The 31-year-old son of President Hafez Al Assad was killed in a car crash in Damascus Friday. He was laid to rest in the village of Kordaha next to his grandmother, Naesa, who died of old age last July.

The day-long funeral procession began in Damascus. The wooden coffin, immersed in a mountain of floral tributes, was carried from the presidential palace to the Mezza military airport in a white hearse, decorated with portraits of the younger Assad posing in military uniform, or riding a galloping white horse.

Black banners and larger than life portraits of the former army major hung from balconies, lamp posts and trees along the road to the airport. Hundreds of thousands of people, weeping hysterically or shouting "allah-u-akbar," lined up the streets.

Church bells pealed all day and loudspeakers blared verses

from the Koran. Syria's state-run television screened the un-fire procession and footage of crowds grieving in streets and mosques across the country.

The 63-year-old president, his wife, Anisa, and their four children accompanied the coffin from their Damascus home to the burial site.

Mr. Assad, somber, but composed, was flanked by his daughter and two of his sons as he slowly walked up the steps to the presidential aircraft at Mezza. From an open cockpit window, he waved to crowds packing the tarmac as though he was reassuring them that he would overcome the tragedy.

Mrs. Assad, clad in a black coat with a white veil covering her head, appeared frail. She was aided up the ramp by a third son, 28-year-old Bashar. Kordaha, some 350 kilometres north of Damascus, was shrouded in black on Saturday and filled with pictures of Hafez.

Security was heavy. Plainclothes police lined the 14-kilometres road from the Mediterranean city of Latakia to Kordaha.

Hundreds of buses and cars filled with wreaths and pictures

Crown Prince returns home after funeral

JORDAN was represented at Saturday's funeral for Hafez Al Assad in Kordaha by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan.

Prince Hassan was accompanied by Acting Speaker of the Upper House of Parliament Zeid Al Rifai, Deputy Prime Minister and Higher Education Minister Saeed Al Tel and the King's advisor Yanal Hikmat. The Regent returned to Amman later in the day.

of the leader's son began to flow into the town from the early hours from all parts of Syria.

Black flags flew and some residents had painted parts of their houses with black in mourning for the town's best known young man.

"This is a shock to us, a catastrophe. Hafez was an excellent young man and we al-

ready to pay for it."

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(Continued on page 5)

Thousands of Somalis from rivalry clans stage peace rally

MOGADISHU (Agencies) — Thousands of Somalis from two rival clans took part in a rally here Friday to welcome a peace pact signed between the warring factions earlier in the week.

Members of the Abgal clan from northern Mogadishu, and loyal to Interim President Ali Mohammad Mahdi, travelled to join the habr gedi under Mohammad Farah Aided.

The pact was signed Sunday after three days of talks chaired by the imam of Hirab, Omar Mohamoud, an Islamic leader revered by both groups. But neither Mr. Ali Mahdi nor Negotiations and neither signed the treaty.

Civilian spokesman for the U.N. operation in Somalia George Bennett described the demonstration Friday as unprecedented.

"UNOSOM applauds the large peace demonstration in south Mogadishu today in support of the Hirab initiative. Thousands of people from the north of the city joined others in the south to celebrate the dawn of peace."

The treaty calls for the clans to live together in peace, end the division of Mogadishu and return property looted during the civil war.

But a power struggle still divides the two men, whose fighters gutted Mogadishu in four months of carnage before the first U.S. Marines landed in December 1992.

U.S. forces are now being gradually withdrawn from Somalia, with 74 troops due to return to the United States Saturday.

U.S. forces spokesman Steve Rausch announced meanwhile that the U.S. army chief of staff, General Gordon Sullivan, was expected here Saturday for a brief visit to the 5,414 US troops in the city.

And Australian Foreign Minister Gareth Evans is due on an official mission to Mogadishu Sunday.

Germans kill Somali

German soldiers fired shots in anger for the first time in Somalia Friday, killing a Somali who broke into a fuel depot at the German headquarters in Belet Huen.

A defence ministry spokesman said it was also the first time German soldiers had killed anyone abroad since the West German Bundeswehr armed forces were founded in 1955.

The ministry said in a statement that all humanitarian aid provided by Germany as part of a U.N. effort in Somalia had been suspended pending an investigation into the incident.

The statement said guards with night-vision binoculars fired warning shots after at least two people sneaked into the German camp at Belet Huen in central Somalia during the night.

One of the intruders later set off an alarm in the fuel depot and the guards aimed their fire in that direction, killing one of the Somalis.

"There have been many attempts to break in but we have staved them off by firing warning shots," Lieutenant Colonel Wolf Reinhard Vogts, a ministry spokesman, told Reuters.

"What was new this time was that they managed to enter the camp and get into the fuel depot," he said. "It is the first time that anyone has been wounded or shot dead by German soldiers in Somalia."

He said the soldiers acted in line with the rules of engagement for U.N. troops in Somalia.

"It is also the first time someone was killed by German troops on a mission outside (West) Germany since the Bundeswehr was founded in 1955," he said.

Germany, keen to live up to its international obligations after being united in 1990, deployed 1,700 logistic troops to Somalia last summer as part of the United Nations mission to restore peace and provide humanitarian aid to starving Somalis.

After other U.N. forces were drawn into combat with warlord Mohammed Farah Aided, Bonn reduced its contingent to 1,300.

The German troops, on their first major deployment abroad since World War II, are only lightly armed and do not have any designated combat role in keeping with the constraints on Bonn's anti-militarist constitution.



FINAL TRIBUTE: Syrian soldiers hold back the crowd in Damascus on Saturday watching the car carrying the remains of Basil Al Assad, the eldest son of Syrian President Hafez Al Assad, on its way to the airport and then to the family village of Kordaba (see page 1). Basil died in a car accident Friday (AFP photo)

Clinton says he told Assad Mideast peace is his priority

WASHINGTON (USIA) — President Bill Clinton says the most important thing he accomplished during his meeting with Syrian President Hafez Al Assad "was to make it clear that my overriding agenda was to do whatever I could to make an honorable, decent, lasting peace in the Middle East."

Mr. Assad was "quite clear in saying that he would support" an independent Lebanon free of all foreign forces. Mr. Clinton said in an interview on the Cable News Network "Larry King Live" programme Jan. 20, the first anniversary of his inauguration.

Following are excerpts from the president's responses on matters relating to foreign policy:

On the effectiveness of Secretary of State Warren Christopher "I think he's done a good job. And I think if you look at this last trip we took to Europe and you look at the work that he has done, along with others in the national security and foreign policy team, the United States was very well received in Europe in this trip."

"They know that we're trying to unify Europe for the first time in history. Never in the whole history has it not been divided. The divisions of Europe caused these two awful world wars in this century, caused the Cold War. We've got a chance to unite it. We may not make it, but we've got a chance to unite it."

"He has worked hard on that. That's right. And I think he's really done a good job with the Middle East peace. You know, he's managed this process. He's been to the Middle East a lot. And he's got good support at the State Department. So I think he's done a good job."

On Mr. Assad's position on the withdrawal of his forces from Lebanon as it relates to peace in the Middle East.

"Lebanon was not the price for peace. He agreed that as part of a comprehensive peace agreement, we should implement the Taif Accord, which as you know calls for an independent Lebanon, free of all foreign forces."

"And President Assad clearly said that if he could be satisfied from his point of view in having a comprehensive peace agreement with Israel, Israel would also have to have an agreement with Lebanon and agreement with Jordan, and obviously the agreement with the PLO, and that Lebanon in the end would be left a free and independent state — independent of all foreign forces."

"So, we talked about that quite explicitly, and he was quite clear in saying that he would support that."

"It wasn't an easy meeting. I mean, I knew it would be a challenging and a difficult meeting, and I think the most important thing for me was to make it clear that my overriding agenda was to do whatever I could to make an honorable, decent, lasting peace in the Middle East."

"I think he really wants to make peace. I think there are a lot of reasons why it's in the interest of the Syrian people and in his own interest to do it — and I think he does. I also made it clear that we still had real differences between us in our bilateral relations. And one of them was what we feel about terrorism — and we talked about it for an hour, you know. And he gave his side and I gave mine. But the American people are entitled to know that."

PLO accepts invitation to bilaterals

TUNIS (AP) — Palestinian negotiators have accepted an invitation to attend the next round of Middle East peace talks Monday in Washington, where they will try to advance talks on autonomy with Israel, a senior Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO) official said Friday.

PLO Executive Committee member Samir Ghosheh said the key issue discussed will be elections for a Palestinian autonomy council, which Israel has agreed to set up in the occupied territories.

The two sides are expected to discuss the formation of the council, its duties and the mechanics of the vote, scheduled for July.

The talks are aimed at clearing away some of the obstacles blocking the implementation of the Sept. 13 accord on Palestinian autonomy in the Gaza Strip and West Bank town of Jericho.

The United States and Russia, co-sponsors of the talks, have invited Israel and its Arab neighbours to Washington on Monday resume the next round of talks in the peace process, started in Madrid in 1991.

NEWS IN BRIEF

King Hassan, S. Arabia donate to storm relief

RABAT (R) — King Hassan of Morocco has donated \$1 million to help victims of storms that lashed the eastern Errachidia province this week. The official news agency MAP reported. At least four people were killed and 50 houses destroyed in floods caused by torrential rains last Wednesday. MAP said Saudi Arabia's Deputy Prime Minister Prince Sultan Ben Abdul Aziz also donated \$500,000 for storm damage repairs. Saudi Arabia paid for construction of a new airport which went into service in Errachidia province in the birthplace of the Alaquid dynasty which has ruled Morocco since the 16th century.

Juppe forecasts 3 contracts with Saudis

PARIS (AFP) — French Foreign Minister Alain Juppe has said that three "major contracts" would be concluded in the next few days between France and Saudi Arabia — but he gave no details on their nature or the companies concerned. Asked at the Forum RMC/Express about the absence of contracts during Prime Minister Edouard Balladur's trip to Saudi Arabia early this month, the minister said the trip had been worthwhile — and "it is quite necessary to have close relationships with that country (Saudi Arabia), which plays an important political and economic role." At the time of the prime minister's trip, authoritative sources had said that conclusion of arms contracts had run up against a problem of financing the deals. Such contracts would relate to modernisation of warships and to missile and radar maintenance.

Kuwaiti wins right to sue Sabah family

LONDON (R) — A former Kuwaiti air force officer has won the right to sue the government of Kuwait with an English high court judge claiming damages for alleged torture. Sulaiman Al Adani claimed in the court of appeal he was sought after being wrongly suspected of leaking a videotape alleged to show a Kuwaiti sheikh in a sexual encounter. He also alleges he was subsequently tortured by members of the Kuwaiti ruling family and state agents. Three appeal court judges ruled that British-born Adani, 33, had an arguable case for saying the Kuwaiti government was not entitled to sovereign immunity from English legal proceedings because the action involved an alleged breach of international human rights laws. The court also held there was evidence suggesting the Kuwaiti government authorised, or at least connived at, threats made to Mr. Adani's life after his return to Britain. The Kuwaiti authorities were not represented at Friday's hearing but will be able to challenge the court ruling once they have been served with the court papers. Mr. Adani, who has joint British and Kuwaiti citizenship, served as a flight lieutenant during the Gulf war and worked with the Kuwaiti resistance during the Iraqi occupation.

Human rights official held in Mauritania

NOUAKCHOTT (AFP) — The head of the Mauritanian association for human rights, which is unrecognised by the authorities, has been arrested for alleged incitement to agitation, an informed source said. Sheikh Sadiou Camara, who is also a member of the executive of the opposition Union for Democracy and Progress (UDP), is accused of saying that descendants of former slaves whose parents had lost trace of them had been sold. Under Mauritanian law any reference to a return to the country's traditional practice of slavery is considered prejudicial to national unity and banned. The UDP for its part said Mr. Camara's arrest Thursday followed contacts he had with the human rights organisation Agir Ensemble (Act Together) in condemning the conduct of the campaign for municipal elections on Jan. 28.

U.S. calls on Sudan, rebels to agree to a truce

NAIROBI (AFP) — The United States has appealed to the Sudanese government and rebels to agree to an immediate ceasefire and cooperate with aid workers providing relief to some 2.5 million starving people in the south for the country. A statement issued by the U.S. embassy here urged Khartoum not to launch its annual dry season offensive against the rebel Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA), saying fighting would exacerbate human suffering in southern Sudan. "We call on both the Khartoum government and the SPLA factions to commit themselves to a ceasefire now and thereby demonstrate their serious intent to settle their differences through negotiations," the statement said. Earlier this month the two SPLA factions agreed in Nairobi to negotiate jointly with the government after talks with foreign ministers from Kenya, Ethiopia, Eritrea and Uganda, members of the Inter-Governmental Authority on Drought and Development (IGADD). The U.S. government is encouraged and fully supported Kenyan President Daniel Arap Moi's and IGADD's initiatives towards a peaceful settlement of the Sudan conflict, the statement added. The rebels have been fighting the Khartoum government since 1983 demanding self-determination for the vast undeveloped south. Fighting between rebel and government forces, and between rival rebel factions, has often stopped aid from reaching the inaccessible southern swamplands, relief officials said.

Morocco frees Briton jailed for drug offence

RABAT (R) — A British truck driver sentenced to four years in prison for drug trafficking, flew home on Friday after being pardoned by King Hassan of Morocco, diplomats said. John Jones, 52, of Maidstone, Kent, had served 22 months of his sentence when he was freed on Thursday after receiving a royal pardon along with 1,144 other prisoners to mark a public holiday on Jan. 11. He was arrested when security forces found 1,200 kilograms of hashish inside a trailer truck he had been sent to Morocco to drive out of the country. He denied knowing that the vehicle contained drugs but was convicted of attempted drug smuggling. There were more than 150 foreigners, most of them Europeans, in Moroccan jails at the end of last year serving sentences for drug offences.

Winemakers thrive among Islamists in Algeria

By Christian Millet
Agence France Presse

MOUZAIA, Algeria — The letters set in relief on the white facades of the imposing buildings scattered across the Moudia plain and on the slopes of the Titeri Mountains are clear enough: "Wine cellar," "wine cooperative," and "winery," they read.

And yet this is the Muslim fundamentalist heartland of Algeria, territory that has become fraught with danger for Westerners since fundamentalists warned foreigners to get out by last Nov. 20.

The wine-growing districts of Blida and Medea have been tense since January 1992 when the government cancelled the second round of a general election that would have swept the fundamentalist Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) to power.

Armed fundamentalists have been particularly active here. Thirteen foreigners have been killed in the area

since the start of December. A Spaniard was killed on the road to Medea on Dec. 2, and 12 Croatian workers had their throats slit on Dec. 14 at Tamezguida, north of Medea.

Daily clashes between fundamentalists and security forces, who have been targeted for murderous attacks, have sent the casualties spiralling.

But the vine, which arrived here before the Romans, not to mention the French, who developed the vineyards considerably at the end of the 19th century, survives.

At Mouzaia, a large town a few kilometres from Tamezguida, Kouider Manari, the director of the 120,000-hectare winery and several vineyards, knows perfectly well that the Koran forbids Muslims to drink alcohol.

He knows too that the FIS, adhering to Koranic law, regards the taxes and revenues the country gets from the export of wine to be "illegal."

But he says that the fun-

damentalists "don't get tied up with activities against the wine trade."

From August to October, depending on the altitude of the vineyards, the harvests went ahead undisturbed, according to local winery directors.

To prove it they show a few souvenir snags of laughing youngsters piling grapes into the paniers strapped to the donkeys that move among the vines.

And of course there is the wine itself, fermenting in the great vats in the wineries, where the employees take delight in drawing off in long pipettes samples of each of the seven Algerian vintages for visitors to taste.

Some of the wineries are in the back of beyond. Some of them are in the centre of towns, like the winery in Mouzaia and the huge Abba Al Ain Cellar, which backs onto the most rundown housing estates, hotbeds of fundamentalism where disaffected and unemployed youths are readily re-

cruted out of cause.

None of them has security guards because none of them feels the need.

"At Tamezguida our cellar is 500 metres (from the building site) where they killed the Croats," said Mr. Mebarki, director of the national office of wine marketing (ONCV), whose head office in Algiers has no special security in force, despite the large sign proclaiming its presence.

Scattered among the wheatfields and the orchards, the vineyards themselves are left unguarded, as is the naval pasta factory in Hadjout, 85 kilometres southwest of Algiers.

On roads heavy with traffic, both major and minor, security is low-key. Along a 350-kilometre jaunt out of Algiers and back. One will hit maybe five checkpoints, including the two at the exit and entrance of the capital.

Devoid of any sandbags or barbed wire, they will be manned by a handful of Kalashnikov-toting policemen, exposed to attack. Mr. Mebarki said none of

the production regions in the east, centre or west of the country has experienced sabotage, or even the threat of disruption.

Last year, the 25,000 hectares of vineyards in Algeria produced 800,000 hectolitres, and exports of the 92 vintage brought in \$50 million.

Towards the end of the 1970s Islamic pressure groups, including a group calling itself "Values," successfully campaigned for bars to be shut down, and for the sale of alcohol to be banned in restaurants within a two-kilometre radius of mosques.

Values was the ideological predecessor of the FIS, which was created in March 1989. And in 1986-87, fundamentalists poured urine and faeces in the vats in certain cellars, ruptured tanks and smashed bottle banks.

Nobody knows why the disruption has stopped, perhaps because, according to the ONCV, winemaking accounts for 4,000 jobs in the industry itself and 40,000 in spin-off trade.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel: 773111-19

PROGRAMME TWO
17:30 Feature Film: "L'Heritier" part 1

19:00 News in French
19:15 Fenetre Sur
19:30 News in Hebrew
20:00 News in Arabic
20:30 You Bet Your Life
21:10 Jordanica
20:55 The Power Game
22:00 News in English
22:20 "Island Son"
23:10 The Golden Palace

PRAYER TIMES

15:10 Fajr
06:30 Sunrise
11:47 Dhuhur
14:39 Asr
17:04 Maghrib
18:24 Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swedeh, Tel. 810740
Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 624590
Annuniation Tel.

Terracostra Church Tel: 622366
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541

Agdian Church Tel. 630851, Tel. 628543
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331

Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751
Armenian International Church Tel. 652526

Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 624328
German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 644195
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints Tel. 624522
Church of Nazareth Tel. 675691

The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811295

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.

It will be partly cloudy to cloudy with rain falling at intervals and winds will be westerly active. In Agaba, partly cloudy weather conditions will prevail with a chance of showers. Winds will be northerly moderate and seas calm.

Min./Max. temp. 4-11

Agaba 9/19
Dumana 3/13
Jordan Valley 10/17

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 14, Agaba 22, Humidity readings: Amman 81 per cent, Agaba 30 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:
Dr. Hisham Kan'an 790286
Dr. Walid Al Masri 675485
Dr. Sa'ad Al 783245

Dr. Riaz Abu Zina 894295
Firas pharmacy 661912
Ferdows pharmacy 778336
Al Asma pharmacy 637055
Naioukh pharmacy 626752
Al Salam pharmacy 630731
Yacoub pharmacy 637660
Najib pharmacy 847632

IBRID:
Dr. Mohammad Al Hila 894295
Alqods pharmacy (—)

ZARQA:
Dr. Hussein Al Haj 984344

Khalifeh pharmacy 985417

Food Control Centre 637111
Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence Emergency 630341

Rescue Police 112, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade 891228
Blood Bank 775121
Highway Police 643402
Traffic Police 896390
Public Security Department 630251
Hotel Complaints 605800
Prison Complaints 661176
Water and Sewerage 891611/15
Complaints 897467
Amman Municipality 787111
Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121
Overseas Calls 611230
Central Amman Telephone 623101
Repairs 661101
Abdali Telephone Repairs 661101
Jordan Television 773111
Radio Jordan 774111
Water Authority 681100
Jordan Electricity Authority 816155
Electric Power Company 636341
RJ Flight Information 08-53240

AMMAN:
Hussein Medical Centre 81381302
Khalid Maternity, J. Amn. 64426106
Akleh Maternity, J. Amn. 644412
Jabal Amman Maternity 662362
Malhas, J. Amman 636140
Palestine, Shmeisan 6641714
Shmeisan Hospital 669131
University Hospital 843845
Al-Musharraf Hospital 6672279
The Islamic, Abdali 66612707
Al-Ahli, Abdali 6641646
Italian, Al-Muhajir 771013
Al-Bashir, J. Ashrafieh 77511126
Army, Marika 891611/15
Queen Alia Hospital 61224051
Amal Hospital 674155

ZARQA:
Zarqa Govt. Hospital (09)983323
Zarqa National Hospital (09)985660
Ibn Sina Hospital (09)98732
Al Hikma Modern Hospital (09)989090

IBRID:
Princess Basma Hospital (02)278555
Greek Catholic Hospital (02)272275
Ibn Al Nafies Hospital (02)247110
AQABA:
Princess Haya Hospital (03)314111

Queen Alia Int'l. Airport 08-53200

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:
Hussein Medical Centre 81381302
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Akleh Maternity, J. Amn. 644412
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IBRID:
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Greek Catholic Hospital (02)272275
Ibn Al Nafies Hospital (02)247110
AQABA:
Princess Haya Hospital (03)314111

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (08)53240-5, where it should always be verified.

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)
05:15 Bangkok (RU)
06:00 Damascus (RU)
06:30 Jeddah (RU)
07:00 Dubai, Abu Dhabi (RU)
07:30 Beirut (RU)
08:00 London (RU)
08:30 Athens, Rome (RU)
09:00 Amsterdam, New York (RU)
09:30 Cairo (RU)
10:00 Riyadh (RU)
10:30 Jeddah (RU)
11:00 Agaba (RU)
11:30 New Delhi (RU)
12:00 Abu Dhabi, Dubai (RU)
12:30 Singapore, Jakarta (RU)
13:00 Bangkok (RU)
13:30 Sanaa (RU)
14:00 Anqaba (RU)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

11:00 Damascus (AZ)
12:25 Abu Dhabi, Bahrain (GF)
14:35 Moscow (SU)
19:40 Larnaca (CY)
19:45 Beirut (ME)
20:45 Cairo (MS)
22:30 Istanbul (TA)

DEPARTURES
Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)
05:30 Agaba (RU)
06:00 Beirut (RU)
06:30 Frankfurt (RU)
08:30 Cairo (RU)
11:00 Vienna (RU)
11:30 Athens, Rome (RU)
12:00 Amsterdam, New York (RU)
12:30 Cairo (RU)
13:00 Riyadh (RU)
13:30 Jeddah (RU)
14:00 Agaba (RU)
14:30 New Delhi (RU)
15:00 Abu Dhabi, Dubai (RU)
15:30 Singapore, Jakarta (RU)
16:00 Bangkok (RU)
16:30 Sanaa (RU)
17:00 Anqaba (RU)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)
12:10 Rome (AZ)
13:30 Delhi, Bahrain (GF)
15:25 Moscow (SU)
18:30 Larnaca (CY)
20:55 Cairo (MS)

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13:30 Delhi, Bahrain (GF)
15:25 Moscow (SU)
18:30 Larnaca (CY)
20:55 Cairo (MS)

HJAZ RAILWAY TRAIN

Dep. Amman 8:00 a.m. every Monday
Dep. Damascus 7:30 a.m. every Sunday
Arr. Amman 5:00 p.m. every Sunday

MARKET PRICES

Kingdom committed to peace decades ago — Regent

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, has said Jordan was the first country in the region to propose a comprehensive peaceful settlement of the Middle East problem.

In an interview with the Israeli Yediot Aharonot daily, Prince Hassan said Jordan had proposed in the mid-1930s a plan on self-rule for the Jews before the establishment of the Jewish state, saying this idea might have provided a good framework for co-existence between Arabs and Jews.

Jordan, the Regent noted, had launched a series of initiatives over a period of 25 years and none of them succeeded in bringing peace to the region.

Prince Hassan called for giving priorities to several main issues in the peace process, including the transfer of power from the Israelis to the Palestinians in the occupied territories and the demarcation of the borders between Jordan and Israel.

Instead of attempting to hold public meetings between the Jordanians and the Israelis to discuss economic and tourism issues among others, the two sides should hold meetings on sovereignty, which is of concern to everyone because the Kingdom wants a constructive peace, he told the Israeli paper, in the first interview of its kind.

"Based on that, we have welcomed the Israeli-Palestinian agreement on principles and we call for having this agreement fall within the comprehensive framework of the peace process and we should have a conception of the region as a whole," said the Regent.

Prince Hassan also dealt with the issue of refugees saying Jordan has received three waves of refugees and displaced persons in 1948, 1967, and again in 1991 as a result of the Gulf war.

The refugees of 1948 are asking what would the agreement on principles reached between the PLO and Israel give them, he noted, adding that people should be made to feel that peace would give something to everyone, wherever they are.

"People now realise that peace is really a useful remedy for everyone, provided that peace would be comprehensive in the whole region, and that is why we had always stressed the need to have a comprehensive peace," Prince Hassan said.

The Crown Prince said he agreed to being interviewed for the first time by an Israeli newspaper "because it was important to give our view and our side of the story."

Amman police arrest robbery suspects

AMMAN (Petra) — The Amman Police Department Saturday said it has arrested a group suspected of a number of thefts and robberies in and around Amman.

Department Director Brigadier Abdullah Al Hababbeh said that the first of the group to be apprehended was caught while he was trying to break into a house in Amman.

Brig. Hababbeh said the man was interrogated and confessed to committing robberies at other homes and to breaking into cars and stealing their contents in collaboration with two other persons in several places.

According to Brig. Hababbeh the suspects arrested admitted to selling some of the electrical appliances they had stolen to people in Zarqa and Russeifa.

Police retrieved the stolen items and arrested the buyers for interrogation, said Brig. Hababbeh.

In another development, the police patrol in Amman recently apprehended a man whom they said was sleeping in cars and had in his possession radio cassette recorders they said were stolen from several cars.

He said the man, who identity was not disclosed, admitted to thefts and robberies conducted with three other people and that they sold the stolen items.

Brig. Hababbeh said all those suspected as accomplices to the robberies were arrested for questioning. He said some of them have admitted to taking part in the robberies and stealing jewellery.

Jordan could ask Iran to reduce diplomatic staff

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Jordan has not formally asked the Iranian government to reduce the number of its diplomats in Jordan, but the high number of Iranian diplomatic staff at the embassy here is an issue of concern, officials said Saturday.

The officials, however, emphasised that the issue had no political implications on bilateral relations and was more related to diplomatic compatibility.

They noted that the Iranian embassy in Amman had 19 accredited diplomats in addition to an ambassador, while the Jordanian mission in Tehran had one diplomat in addition to an ambassador.

"This is a large disparity and this has to be addressed, but no formal communication has been sent in this connection," said a senior official who preferred not to be identified.

The official was commenting on local reports that the Foreign Ministry had sent a memorandum to the Iranian government asking it to reduce the number of diplomats accredited here at 35.

The Iranian mission here declined comment on the reports and referred all questions to the Foreign Ministry.

The Iranian foreign ministry in Tehran denied the reports and also said that the number of its diplomats was also exaggerated.

According to the official, most of the Iranian diplomats here are designated as "administrative" staff, a term that could mean anything from consular assistants to attaches.

Ahmad Mbeideen, head of the information section at the foreign ministry, said "it was possible" that the Iranian embassy here was made aware of the Jordanian concern.

"Nineteen diplomats in addition to an ambassador mean that many additional security staff required from our side and this is a burden," Mr. Mbeideen told the Jordan Times.

"This is not a political issue at all," he stressed. "This is purely an organisational matter to do with streamlining the situation."

"Jordanian-Iranian relations remain as strong as ever, friendly and brotherly," added Mr. Mbeideen.

Jordan and Iran restored diplomatic relations in early 1990 after 10 years of strains caused by Amman's support for Iraq in the 1980-88 Iran-Iraq war.

Iran reopened its embassy in March 1991 and appointed the first ambassador in 13 years in October 1993.

The Jordanian embassy in Tehran reopened in 1992 and the Kingdom's present ambassador, Yusef Istabouli, took office a few months later.

The Iranian ambassador in Jordan is Ahmad Dastmalchian, who has served in Syria and Lebanon.

Amman-Tehran relations have improved steadily along with the volume of trade. The two sides recently signed a memo of understanding on increasing trade, and Iran held its first trade exhibition in Amman late last year and invited Jordanian industries to exhibition their products in Tehran.

Jordan's exports to Iran totalled \$10 million and its imports from Iran amounted to \$5 million in 1992. Figures for 1993 were not immediately available, but a similar volume was expected.

U.N. task force meeting stresses social development, combating poverty

NEW YORK (Petra) — A special advisory task force set up by the United Nations to help formulate concepts and future programmes for the United Nations development programmes Saturday concluded its meetings in New York, passing recommendations to the world organisation stressing the need for appropriate attention to social development, combating poverty, protecting the earth's environment and helping the poorer nations improve their production capabilities.

Her Royal Highness Princess Basma is member of the 15-person task force that met for three days at U.N. headquarters to discuss and propose programmes to deal with natural and environmental disasters, famines, refugees and other challenges facing world communities.

The task force has been set up in order to help promote the U.N. role in social, economic and environmental issues around the world, according to U.N. sources here.

It called on the private sector to employ modern science and technology to contribute to development through close cooperation with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

Special emphasis was placed on the development of manpower in developing nations with help from specialised U.N. agencies.

Before going to New York for the meeting, Princess Basma, who is honorary chairperson of the Queen Alia Fund for Social Development (QAF), urged the world organisation to corroborate its social, economic and environmental roles around the globe and help build up individual nation's capabilities in these fields.

During her stay in New York, Princess Basma met with the secretary general of the International conference on women which is to be held in Beijing next year.

She reviewed with her several issues pertaining to the development of women's roles and preparations for the conference in Beijing.

Princess Basma, who is to lead the Jordanian delegation to the Beijing conference, is also expected to head the Jordanian women's delegation at a regional conference to be held in Amman towards the end of the year in cooperation with the Arab League and the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), to prepare for the 1995 international conference.



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Minister sets up coordinating panel

AMMAN (Petra) — Minister of Social Development Mohammad Al Sgour Saturday decided to set up a committee charged with coordinating between the ministry and foreign societies working in Jordan.

The committee will also be entrusted with creating a mechanism for implementing developmental programmes in various parts of the Kingdom and enhancing cooperation with foreign societies in an effort to improve development programmes offered in local communities.

In addition, the committee will conduct studies on development projects of carried out to fight poverty and unemployment, with the objective of improving social and economic conditions of citizens.

The committee includes Director of the Local Societies Development Department Hadya Al Khatib as chairperson. Director of Save the Children Federation Rebecca Salti, CARE organisation representative Munif Abul Rish, Director of the Near East Churches Society for the Relief of Refugees Odeh Qawwas and Director of the Islamic Relief Organisation Issa Bushra.



Mohammad Al Sgour

Lebanon, Jordan upgrade transport, transit protocol

AMMAN (Petra) — Lebanon and Jordan have reached a new agreement on land transport and transit upgrading a 1965 protocol.

Ministry of Transport Secretary General Awad Tell Saturday made the announcement upon his return from Beirut at the head of a four-member delegation which negotiated the new deal.

The agreement provides for general guidelines for organising transport and transit operations of trucks and buses, said Mr. Tell.

The two sides set up a joint standing committee to follow up on the implementation of the agreement, study obstacles that could impede its execution and also consider complaints by carriers from either country and propose solutions to outstanding or emerging problems, according to Mr. Tell.

He said the agreement also provided for trade exchanges, in addition to amendments to clauses on transit and transport.

Mr. Tell added that the agreement becomes final after it has been signed by the ministers of transport in the two countries.

Referring to the fees, taxes and other tolls charged by either country upon the entry of goods and the passage of travellers, Mr. Tell said that the two sides agreed that the minimum rate would be charged by both countries but these rates would also have to be endorsed by the two governments.

Mr. Tell was accompanied on the Beirut trip by officials of the ministries of Customs, Interior, Industry and Trade as well as the Transport Ministry.

Qatar's Sheikh Khalifeh suggests training Islamic judges in Jordan

AMMAN (Petra) — Visiting Qatari Islamic cleric Sheikh Abdul Aziz Saleh Al Khalifeh Saturday suggested that Jordan open the door for Qatari Islamic judges to acquire higher training in Islamic judicial affairs in the Kingdom and that Qatar benefit from the existing Jordanian Islamic laws.

Speaking at a meeting with Chief Islamic Justice Sheikh Izzeddin Al Khatib Al Tamimi, he said Qatar would benefit from Sharia Islamic laws that could also be enacted in the future.

Sheikh Tamimi proposed the creation of a joint committee of Muslim clerics from Qatar and Jordan to define issues that emerge in handling procedural problems related to the Islamic judiciary and facilitate matters pertaining to Islamic procedures of Sharia court rulings.

The Qatari official, who is also deputy head of the Sharia courts in Qatar, met with Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Abdul Salam Al Abbadi and discussed the role of the ministry in safeguarding Awqaf property, caring for the mosques and administering orphans' funds.

Syrian embassy to receive condolences

AMMAN (Petra) — The Syrian embassy in Amman Saturday announced that it will open a register to receive condolences on the death of Basil Assad, the 31-year-old son of Syrian President Hafez Al Assad. The embassy said the register will be open for three days beginning Sunday from noon until 3 p.m.

Basil Al Assad died Friday in a car accident in Damascus.

Basel Assad laid to rest

(Continued from page 1)

ways felt he was one of the ordinary people who did not behave like the son of the president," said Youssef Alia, 30, a taxi driver.

"Since yesterday, I have not eaten anything. I wish it was one of my sons who had died and not Basel... I heard the news from television but I could hardly believe it. I felt a shiver I have never felt before," he said.

On arrival on the northern city of Latakia, thousands of young men jostled around the aircraft for a chance to carry the coffin into a hearse that drove it first to the family's home in Kordaba.

From the house the coffin was carried by army officers and the younger Assad's schoolmates to the village mosque for prayer before burial.

A huge slogan outside the Naessa Mosque, named after the president's mother, read: "We are all your sons, Hafez Assad."

Scores of dignitaries from around the Arab World converged on Kordaba. They included Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak and his top adviser Osama El Baz, and Lebanon's president Elias Hrawi, Prime Minister Rafik Hariri and Parliament Speaker Nabih Berri.

Arab agriculture ministers, who were due to open talks in Damascus Saturday, said they had postponed their meeting to go to Kordaba to attend the funeral.

Officials said the ministers would open their talks in the Syrian capital on Sunday.

Delegations were also dispatched by the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and Iran, while cars travelled in from all over Syria.

Damascus came to a standstill meanwhile as thousands of people paid tribute.

Businesses, banks and most government offices shut down, while restaurants and hotels declared three days of mourning during which the sale of liquor will be banned.

WHAT'S GOING ON

The following listings are compiled from monthly bulletins and the daily Arabic press. Readers are advised to verify the listed time and place with the concerned institutions.

EXHIBITIONS

- Exhibition by Lebanese artist Hussein Madi at Darat Al Funnat of the Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation. Also showing the "permanent" exhibition of 54 Arab contemporary artists. (Tel. 643251/2)
- Art exhibition by artist Raja Abu Ghazaleh and Mohammad Al Jalous at the Jordan Writers Association.
- Art exhibition by artist Makram Khaghandouqah at the Spanish Cultural Centre.
- Art exhibition by artist Omar Al Basoul at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- Exhibition on the art of architecture at the French Cultural Centre.
- Art exhibition by several Iraqi and Jordanian artists at Orfali Art Gallery (Tel. 826932).

FILMS & DRAMA

- Film entitled "Dial M For Murder" at the American Center at 5:00 p.m. (105 minutes).
- Drama entitled "The Happy Man" at the Phoenix Gallery for Culture and Art at 7:00 p.m.
- Drama entitled "Hamlet Wakes Up Again" at the Royal Cultural Centre at 7:00 p.m.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Royal Decrees approve several appointments

AMMAN (Petra) — A Royal Decree Saturday was issued approving the appointment of Asem Ghosheh as director of the Palestinian Affairs Department. Mr. Ghosheh, who was an advisor at the Royal Court, succeeded Adel Irsheid, who now serves as minister of state. Meanwhile, the Cabinet also decided to link the Palestinian Affairs Department to the responsibilities of Minister Irsheid. Another Royal Decree issued Saturday approved the appointment of Laurence Elhas as an advisor at the Prime Ministry. Ms. Elhas was transferred from the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities. Other decrees issued Saturday approved the appointment of Ghassan Riyad Al Mifteh as secretary general of the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities and Faraj Al Hashem as director general of National Aid Fund. Mr. Al Hashem previously worked at the Ministry of Municipal and Rural Affairs and the Environment.

Princess Aisha visits policewomen's HQ

AMMAN (Petra) — Her Royal Highness Princess Aisha Bint Al Hussein Saturday visited the policewomen's headquarters where she was received by its commander, Lieutenant-General Hind Hammouqa. Lt.-Gen. Hammouqa briefed Princess Aisha on the establishment of the policewomen's force and its duties. Princess Aisha watched military exercises performed by the command personnel.

Chief of staff leaves for U.S.


AMMAN (Petra) — Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Abdul Hafez Miral Al Kaabneh Saturday left for the United States on a several-day official visit. Gen. Kaabneh was seen off at Queen Alia International Airport by the chief of staff of the land forces.

Peace talks team heads for Washington

AMMAN (Petra) — Several members of the Jordanian delegation to the Middle East peace talks left Amman late Friday for Washington to join delegation head Faysal Al Tarawneh, who serves as Jordan's ambassador to the U.S. The delegation members, Munther Haddadin, Safwan Touqan, Dureid Mahasneh and Ibrahim Badran, will attend meetings for heads of the delegations participating in the peace process which are due to start Monday.

Trade minister meets with foreign envoys

AMMAN (Petra) — Minister of Industry and Trade Rima Khalaf Saturday discussed with Italian Ambassador to Jordan Romualdo Bettini means to enhance Jordanian-Italian cooperation in economic and commercial fields. In a meeting at the ministry, Ms. Khalaf and Mr. Bettini stressed the importance of launching joint Jordanian-Italian investment projects. Ms. Khalaf also met with Algerian Ambassador to Jordan Al Hashemi Qaddouri and discussed with him economic cooperation. The minister called for reviving a Jordanian-Algerian agreement which was reached earlier. The agreement, she said, was signed by the Jordanian government and was awaiting the endorsement of the Algerian side. She said reviving the agreement and amending it in a way that conforms to the situation prevailing in the two countries and the region as a whole would help activate economic relations. Mr. Qaddouri said he will inform his government of the issue, expressing hope that Algiers would take a quick decision on it.



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Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published in English by the Jordan Press Foundation.
Established 1975
مؤسسة الصحافة الأردنية

Chairman of the Board of Directors:

MAHMOUD AL KAYED

Director General:

MOHAMMAD AMAD

Editor-in-Chief:

GEORGE S. HAWATMEH

Editorial and advertising offices:

Jordan Press Foundation,
University Road, P.O. Box 6710, Amman, Jordan.

Telephones: 667171/6, 670141-4

Telex: 21497 ALRAI JO

Facsimile: 696183

The Jordan Times is published daily except Fridays.

Subscription and advertising rates are available from the Jordan Times advertising department.

Sunday's Economic Pulse

Issues that should be solved before talk of peace

THE main objective of the Palestinians in the ongoing peace process is getting rid of the Israeli occupation and having their own Palestinian state. To them, other issues are mere details. The major objective for Lebanon is the recovery of its occupied southern strip. Any further problems with the Israelis are negligible. The objectives of Syria are the recovery of the Golan Heights, and the recognition of the special Syrian role in Lebanon in particular and in the Middle East in general. Other points are not essential.

In contrast, the Jordanian objectives, which may be clear in the minds of some top officials, are not clear to the man in the street and to a big segment of politicians.

It is not unusual to hear otherwise informed Jordanians claiming that there are no serious Jordanian issues pending with Israel. If we decide to enter into a peace agreement with Israel, such agreement may be signed within twenty four hours, they claim. The only reason holding us back, in their view, is that Jordan insists on a comprehensive Arab-Israeli settlement. What Jordan is after, according to these people, is the state of peace itself and making sure that our Arab brethren get their legitimate rights. Such logic assumes that Jordan is simply another Arab country supporting other Arab

peoples confronting Israeli threat.

In fact, there are major Jordanian issues of crucial importance which must be settled to our satisfaction before a peace treaty with Israel becomes feasible, even if PLO, Syria and Lebanon conclude their own peace agreements. Most of these Jordanian issues are yet to be resolved in a precise manner.

First, and most obvious, are the borders. Israel occupies Jordanian fertile land in the north and a strip of the Dead Sea in the south along the Araba Valley and near the Dead Sea.

Second is water. Over 40 years, Israel grabbed most of Jordan's share of the water of the Jordan River and its branches and diverted it to the Naqab desert at the expense of the immediate region.

Third issue is security. Jordan needs meaningful guarantees that Israel will no more pose a threat to its security and integrity. Israel should declare that its borders of June 4, 1967, are its final borders, and that it will abandon its arsenal of weapons of mass destruction, especially nuclear heads.

Fourth are refugees. Palestinian refugees living in camps in Jordan should be allowed to return to their homeland. The refugees issue is not solely a Palestinian issue. It is a Jordanian issue of the first degree.

Fifth is access to the West Bank. Israel is still exploiting the West Bank as a captured market, which is not tolerable under peace.

These issues are vital. So far, Jordan did not get but some indicators of the probability that part of these problems may be solved.

How can anybody claim that Jordan has no important pending problems of its own with Israel or think for one moment that everything is set for the go-ahead sign as soon as other Arab parties are ready to sign?

As things stand now, Jordanian lands are still occupied. Our fair share of water is not defined or agreed upon. Israel did not ease its grip on the West Bank market and did not allow Palestinians to exercise their economic sovereignty and deal at arm-length with all parties. We have no commitment or time-table for the return of Palestinian refugees of the camps. Israel has not yet defined its borders or abandoned expansionist designs to become a peaceful country, free of nuclear and chemical weapons.

Peace is not yet at hand, and the Jordanian track of negotiations did not progress sufficiently to warrant talking about an imminent treaty and normalisation of relations.

A two-way street

AFTER MANY hours of talks in Geneva last Sunday between President Hafez Al Assad of Syria and his American counterpart Bill Clinton, the American leader told reporters he believed that President Assad had "made a clear, forthright and very important statement on normal peace relations" with Israel. President Clinton was referring to Mr. Assad's assertion that if the Israeli leaders wished, "a new era of security and stability in which there are normal peaceful relations among all shall dawn." The buzz word in the exchange between the presidents is "normal relations." This has been an Israeli demand. They insisted, and still do, that if the Syrians agreed to full, normal relations with Israel, the Israeli leaders would consider withdrawing from the whole of the Golan Heights as demanded by Syria. Syrian President Hafez Assad had on many occasions said Syria can live without the Golan. He apparently told Mr. Clinton that even if Israel withdrew from the Golan, the West Bank, Gaza and South Lebanon, normal relations cannot possibly be attained between a nuclear-armed state and its Arab neighbours.

Security and stability as uttered by the Syrian president are the prerequisite for normal relations. For unless all the underlying issues that characterised the conflict over the past 30 years are resolved — namely Palestinian rights, refugees, water and a balance of power — a peace that would endure cannot be attained. The peoples of Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, particularly, and other Arab peoples, in general, have paid so dearly in terms of human and material losses during the past 40 years that normal relations will not be enough to address. Israel at the same time did not suffer as its neighbours did. It has always been supported economically by the West and its human losses were kept to minimum due to a superiority in war also ensured by a continuous flow of the most sophisticated arms technology.

What Syria is saying to the U.S. and Israel is that normal peace goes beyond withdrawal from occupied territories and the establishment of diplomatic, cultural and economic ties. Peace is a state of mind. And Israel should not try to portray its fears of Arab intentions, it is the Arabs who are fearful of a future Israeli dominance of the region.

In this regard, the Israeli prime minister cannot evade these real issues by threatening to call the Israeli people to a referendum. That is not the answer. The Israelis, like any people, can be led to say yes or no by their own leaders. If their leaders prove to them that peace is possible, it will say yes. And the contrary is true. But besides the fact that a referendum in this case is illegal, both under international and Israeli laws, the threat is obvious. Rabin would surely not go for a referendum if he were sure to get peace on his terms. Only the feeling that the process is not working to his liking will make him go to the people; to ensure a negative response.

What Mr. Rabin and his fellow leaders in Israel need to recognise is that the Arab demands for stability and security are as genuine as his country's. Peace is a two-way street not an entry only to the heart of the Arab hinterland.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

AL RA'I Arabic daily welcomed the reconciliation between the president of Yemen and his vice president as a way for ending for good, the differences which at one time had threatened to flare up into an armed conflict. Thanks to the quiet mediation efforts working behind the scenes, the Yemeni leaders are now on the right track towards bolstering their unity of 1990 and towards ending sources of differences and dispute, said the paper. While awaiting the meeting between the Yemeni leaders later this month one can only hope that the two parties keep up the good faith and that Arab mediators retain the momentum of their good offices in order to crown the reconciliation with final success, said the paper. Each and every honest Arab takes pride in this happy ending and over the Yemeni leaders success in overcoming their differences and saving their country from bloodshed and preserving their nation's unity, said the daily. It noted that the document signed by the two sides on ending differences and launching a new chapter of closer cooperation is bound to further enhance the meaning of unity between the North and the South of the country and is also bound to further give momentum to the process of democracy which the Yemenis have chosen as a path for a prosperous life.

A COLUMNIST IN Al Ra'i draws a contrast between the earthquake that hit Los Angeles in the past week and the constant tremors and earthquakes rocking the Palestinian people as a result of continued occupation of their homeland. It is because we are used to catastrophes in the Arab World in general and in Palestine in particular that we sympathise with the victims of the Los Angeles quake which killed 55 persons and displaced 15,000 others, said Mohammad Qariuti. The writer said that it is amazing to hear world media in general and the U.S. media in particular giving so much attention to the sufferings of the quake victims, but nothing is being said about the millions of Palestinians, the victims of Zionist aggression and occupation who have been living in camps for more than forty years. The Palestinians continue to suffer from real quakes and real tragedies caused by the Israeli occupation and their homes are continually razed by Israeli bulldozers and rockets, said the writer. The misfortunes which the Palestinians are exposed to are much greater in intensity and consequences than the Los Angeles tremor, but the Palestinian victims cries are stifled while those of the American victims are heard loud and clear simply because the Arab blood is worth nothing in Western views under the new world order. The writer said that the Arabs sympathise with all the victims of natural disasters but they are also looking forward towards seeing mankind sympathise with the Palestinian victims of occupation.

By Alan Elsner
Reuter

New humanitarian tragedy brewing in Zaire

M. KAHIL



WASHINGTON — A major humanitarian tragedy is brewing in the huge Central African nation of Zaire where several million people are facing disaster as a result of internal strife and a collapsing economy.

"Zaire is something of a forgotten country in which the potential for huge tragedy exists which could drag on for a long time," said Nan Borton, director of the U.S. Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance, a branch of the Agency for International Development.

The United States spent nearly \$7 million in emergency aid in Zaire in fiscal year 1993 and could spend double that this year. But the bill could ultimately run much higher than that if Zaire continues its slide into chaos.

Zaire has been ruled since 1965 by President Mobutu Sese Seko, who has treated the country as his personal fiefdom, stripping it of its assets and becoming a billionaire in the process.

For the past two years, he has fought to hold on to power, under pressure from opposition leader Etienne Tshisekedi who has the support of most of the international community. The power struggle has paralyzed the country.

Inflation last year was an estimated 8,500 per cent and the country's civic infrastructure has fallen apart. First signs of malnutrition are already

apparent. There's been an increase in infant mortality. Malnutrition is particularly affecting the old, the young and the poor. Three million people are affected, half of them severely," Mr. Borton told Reuters in an interview.

An aid situation update issued late last October reported civil strife in and around the capital, Kinshasa, and in Shaba and north Kivu provinces which had resulted in hundreds of thousands of people being

displaced. During the cold war, Zaire was a key U.S. ally in Africa. His country provided base for U.S. intelligence gathering and was a conduit for arms to be funneled to anti-communist rebels in neigh-

bouring Angola. However, the United States deserted Mobutu at the end of the cold war and has since withdrawn its ambassador and cut off all aid except emergency humanitarian assistance. As a result, Washington has little

leverage over Mobutu, who seems determined to hang on to power at all costs.

The United States now supports demands by Mr. Tshisekedi that Mobutu give up control over key areas of Zairian affairs, starting with its finances.

Privately, officials say the best thing would be for Mobutu to retire gracefully to some suitable exile.

Gearing up for disaster relief in Zaire is difficult. The country is immense, internal communications are very poor and few private voluntary organizations even have a presence.

In addition, according to State Department officials, outsiders are wary of involvement after the unfortunate experience of Somalia.

"The donor community doesn't want to get involved because it looks like pouring money down a black hole," said a State Department official.

"Everybody blames the United States because we supported Mobutu during the cold war. They say, 'you supported him. Why don't you get rid of him?' But it's not that easy," the official said.

In the latest development, the New York Times reported over the weekend that Mobutu had written to President Clinton asking for help in organizing what would be Zaire's first multiparty elections. But in light of Mobutu's track record, U.S. officials remain sceptical of his intentions.

Shiite Bahrainis forced into exile

Amnesty International opposes forcible exile when it is imposed as a formal measure by governments against nationals of their own country.

Amnesty International has received countless reports of the forcible exile of Bahraini nationals from Bahrain since the early 1980s. At that time, in the wake of an alleged coup attempt, members of the majority Shiite community suspected of having links with Iran were forcibly expelled to Iran. Former political detainees and even entire families have testified that they were rounded up, stripped of their Bahraini passports or identity papers and forced to board small boats bound for Iran, even though they had no knowledge of that country or its language. Sometimes, those expelled were even supplied by the Bahraini authorities with false documents stating that they were born in Iran and were Iranian citizens.

In one harrowing case, the wife of a political prisoner described to Amnesty International how she had resisted forcible exile with other members of her family, including her 22-month-old child. Although she was eight months pregnant, she was forced to board a fishing craft together with more than 20 other families and former political prisoners, their hands still handcuffed. All were told to surrender Bahraini passports and birth certificates and were given new documents stating that they were born in Iran. She gave birth shortly after the four-day crossing to Iran.

Following the dissolution of Bahrain's short-lived parliament in 1975, and in the early 1980s, a number of Bahraini nationals decided to leave the country. Some were escaping to avoid imprisonment and torture, while others who were relatives of political prisoners fled the country to avoid other forms of harassment. Some left the country to study or work abroad. A number of them then engaged in political opposition activities from Iran, Syria and former Eastern bloc countries, for organisations such as the Islamic Front for the Liberation of Bahrain, the Bahrain Liberation Front and the Popular Front of Bahrain. (There are no legal political parties in

Bahrain.) In recent years, however, with some improvements in the human rights situation in Bahrain, and the changing political climate, many Bahraini nationals have attempted to return to their country after years of voluntary exile outside the country.

Those who have tried to return include the wives and families of a number of political prisoners who had originally fled the country to escape harassment. Many were held for days or even up to a week at Bahrain's international airport upon their return, before being forcibly expelled from Bahrain. A number of these families have now been permitted to return, but usually after more than one unsuccessful attempt.

Throughout 1993 returning Bahraini nationals have been questioned on arrival at the airport about their past political activities or publications they have written, before being returned to the country of their former residence on the first available flight. No reasons are given. They are given no opportunity to challenge the decision to expel them, or even to know the grounds for the measures being taken. They are denied any opportunity to appeal against the decision to expel them, or to challenge its legality through the courts. Those who return to Bahrain after long periods abroad are often issued with new Bahraini passports — valid for one year only — before being expelled from the country. In some cases, the passports are valid only for two or three countries, such as Syria, the United Arab Emirates or Saudi Arabia. These passports appear to be issued solely for the purpose of facilitating their expulsion from Bahrain and entry to another country.

Among the scores of Bahraini nationals attempting to return to Bahrain in 1993 was Dr. Abdul Aziz Rashid Al Rashid, a medical doctor, who has been the subject of repeated measures to forcibly exile him from Bahrain. His first unsuccessful attempt to return to his country was on Oct. 6, 1991, when he was held and interrogated for four days before his expulsion. He subsequently returned to Bahrain on Nov. 12, 1993, and was expelled

the following day to Syria via Kuwait. On his arrival in Kuwait, however, the authorities refused to allow him entry as he had no valid travel documents — his Bahraini passport had expired — and returned him to Bahrain the same day.

Nov. 13, at Bahrain's international airport Dr. Rashid was refused entry once again, and expelled to Syria. The Syrian authorities also refused him entry and returned him to Bahrain, apparently on Nov. 14. He remained confined at the airport until Nov. 18, when he was again expelled to Syria. On Nov. 19, Dr. Rashid was once more returned to Bahrain. He remained at the international airport for a further 24 hours where he was issued with a new Bahraini passport, valid for one year, before being put on a flight to the United Arab Emirates on Nov. 20.

Ahmed Hussein Akbar 'Abbas was forcibly expelled from Bahrain in 1982 when he was stripped of his Bahraini papers and forcibly expelled to Iran. On his return to Bahrain in September 1993 with his Lebanese wife and four children he was reportedly interrogated and beaten before being forcibly expelled to Lebanon, where he was also refused entry and sent back to Bahrain. He was sent once again to Lebanon where he was given temporary residence.

Al Sayyid Hashem Al Mousawi, a former political prisoner tried in 1988, was forcibly expelled to Syria on completion of his five-year sentence in April 1993. On his release he was taken to the airport, where he was reportedly issued with a new Bahraini passport valid for one year.

Badr 'Abdul Malik Mohammad, a writer resident in Cyprus for several years, returned to Bahrain on Aug. 9, 1993. He was returned to Cyprus the following day, after questioning and having been given a new one-year passport. Badr 'Abdul Malik had been imprisoned on occasions in the 1960s and 1970s on account of his political beliefs and activities, and was reportedly subject to forcible exile from Bahrain for one year in 1969.

So far as Amnesty International is aware, none of the people involved had voluntarily given up their Bahraini citizenship and acquired a new nationality.

Amnesty International has repeatedly raised its concerns regarding the practice of forcible exile was the competent authorities in Bahrain, but although some individuals have been allowed to return

and settle in their country again, often after more than one attempt, many more continue to be denied that right.

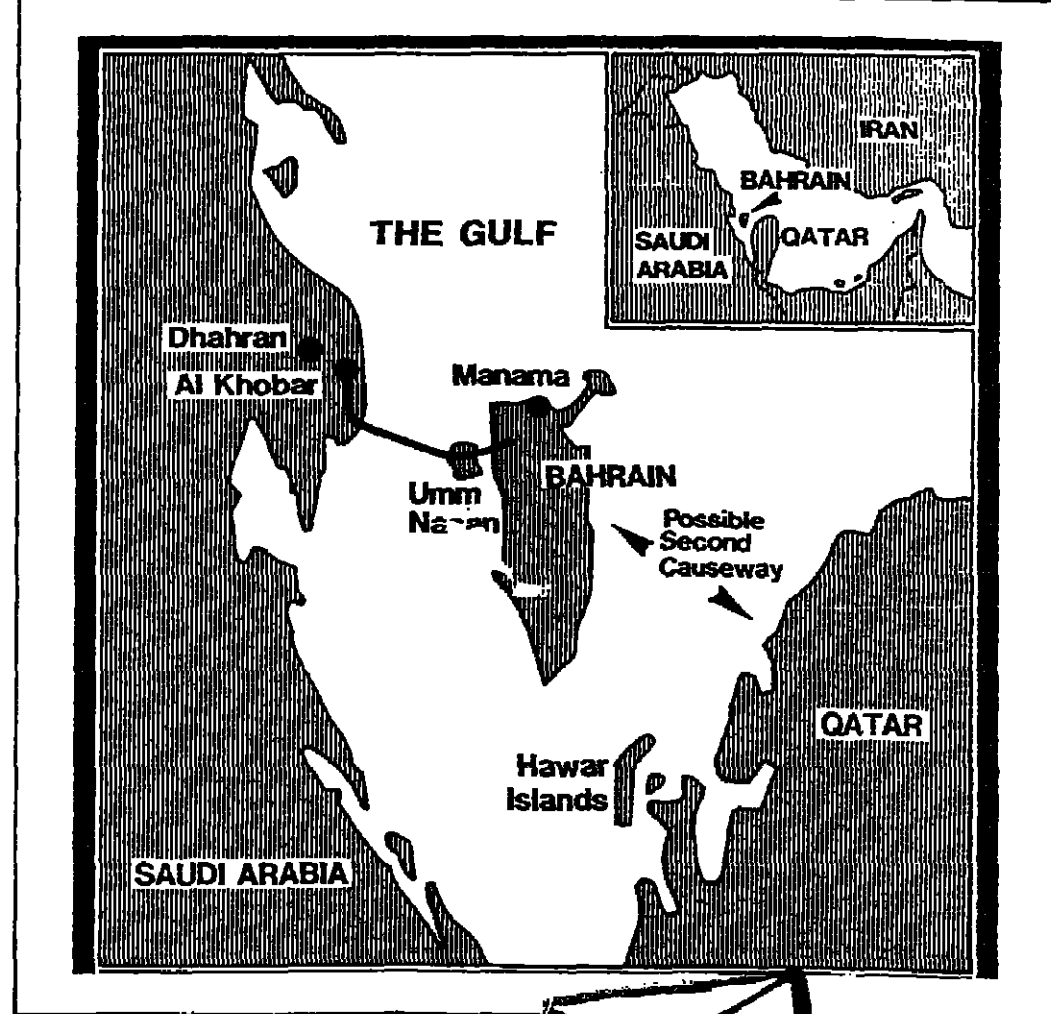
The government has responded to some of Amnesty International's communications regarding victims of forcible exile, stating that those who returned to Bahrain were not in possession of valid travel documents and were therefore forbidden entry "in accordance with normal international practice". However, this fails to take into account that states are obliged to readmit their own nationals. The fact that the Bahraini authorities routinely issue new Bahraini passports to those returning with expired or invalid passports demonstrates beyond doubt that the nationality of the individuals attempting to return is not in question. In practice, the passports appear to be issued with the sole purpose of facilitating their forcible exile.

The government's response also fails to take into consideration that many Bahraini nationals failed to renew their passports while abroad either because they were required to return to Bahrain at a time when they felt they would be at risk of arrest, torture and imprisonment or other forms of harassment, or because the Bahraini embassy to which they had forwarded the passport for renewal refused either to return or renew their passport.

Forcible exile contravenes international human rights standards, including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. All U.N. member states are obliged to implement the Declaration's guarantees, which provide that:

Everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country. (Article 13 (2)).

The practice of forcible exile is also expressly proscribed under Article 17 (c) of Bahrain's own Constitution, which provides that it is forbidden to expel Bahraini citizens from the country or prevent them from returning to Bahrain. Amnesty International is calling on the government of Bahrain to respect these provisions and issue a public declaration that all Bahraini nationals are entitled to return to Bahrain.



Rabinovich: No delay in talks

(Continued from page 1)

Americans, about what to do in exchange for important concessions, are demanding from us," Rabinovich said.

Rabinovich said Friday a 16 U.S.-Syrian summit created the possibility of a breakthrough in the peace process.

"Specifically, I think the deal was created to break the vicious cycle in which we trapped for quite a long time in these negotiations," Rabinovich said of the deal.

"The cycle was in which the U.S. did not want to detail the substance of peace and did not want to widen discussions

on security arrangements before hearing us expand on the question that interests them, the question of withdrawal," he said.

Israel's response to Mr. Assad's post-summit comments was cool, with Mr. Rabin saying the Syrian leader's call for "normal peaceful relations" under a "peace of the brave" needs elaboration.

Mr. Rabin later grudgingly accepted Mr. Assad's words as a basis for more negotiations, but said that when a draft peace treaty was reached a referendum would be held. Syria said such a referendum would be illegal under international law.

Israeli troops wound 7 in Hebron

(Continued from page 1)

killings of collaborators, informers one month to forward, express regret to turn to Islam. The moratorium ended Friday.

The death brought to 790 the number of Palestinians killed in the Gaza Strip during the uprising against Israel. Most were slain as they tried to enter the Gaza Strip.

Two other Palestinians were wounded in a clash between Arabs and Jewish settlers in Hebron and later rushed to Jerusalem's Hadassa hospital.

An AFP photographer said other clashes Saturday pitted Palestinian demonstrators against Israeli soldiers in the West Bank town of Ramallah.

A total of 1,172 Palestinians have been killed by Israeli gunfire since the intifada erupted in December 1987, according to an AFP toll.

post of the Israeli civil administration in the Gaza Strip's refugee camp on Jabalia.

A child, a pensioner and two adults were wounded in the incident and rushed to Shifa hospital in Gaza City.

Two other Palestinians were wounded in a clash between Arabs and Jewish settlers in Hebron and later rushed to Jerusalem's Hadassa hospital.

An AFP photographer said other clashes Saturday pitted Palestinian demonstrators against Israeli soldiers in the West Bank town of Ramallah.

A total of 1,172 Palestinians have been killed by Israeli gunfire since the intifada erupted in December 1987, according to an AFP toll.

Old Arabic thoughts with universal humanitarian values

Ica Wahbeh

Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Cairo and regional delegations of the 130-year-old International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) have welcomed 1994 in a novel way. A calendar.

Expression of the "unity of values and humanitarian ideas found in all civilisations," the calendar contains a set of excerpts from the Arabic literature, whose meanings are also to be found in the human rights legislation adopted by the Fourth Geneva Convention.

Concerned mostly with protection of civilians in case of armed conflicts, the passages are those of famous Arab writers, humanists and thinkers, like Abul Ala Maari, Imam Ali Ibn Abi Taleb, Muhiiddin Al Arabi or Abul Baqa Randi Al Andalusi and preach leniency towards and respect for defeated civilians, prisoners and women.

Drawn on glossy paper in beautiful calligraphy by Syrian artist Munir Al Shaarawi, the intricate writings, in complementing colours, are as much a delight to the eye as they are to the mind.

Among extracts that teach forgiveness for a fallen prisoner, interdiction to harm withdrawing enemies and strike him from behind, duty to free prisoners after the war and to treat hurt enemies (medically) like one treats a dear one, perhaps the most poignant is that talking about sparing plants (symbol for life), of Handallah Ben Ara-

da, that of Habib Al Fahri who, after conquering the city of Dbil first reassured its population on its welfare, right to practise its faith and its material goods and, above all, Andalusi's excerpt on separation of families during war, where he says separating the mother from the child is like separating the spirit from the body.

The avowed goal of the ICRC is to live up to its motto: "If we cannot stop war, we try to alleviate the misery it brings about."

And in a world that seems increasingly bent on destruction, the ICRC proves an indefatigable toiler, with its members and volunteers at the forefront of the conflict lines.

"Every time we are witnesses of breaches of international law, we take action," said Mu'in Kassiss, translator at the ICRC delegation in Jordan.

Pierre Gerber, ICRC delegate in Jordan, and originating from Switzerland, the country where the committee is seated, explained that branches of the committee are set up in times of war or internal conflicts.

Thus, after 1967, it opened offices in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria and after the Gulf war in Iraq.

Often mistaken for a political or religious entity, the ICRC is a neutral, independent, non-aligned organisation that has chosen, at its inception, neutrality and confidentiality, according to Mr. Gerber.

Its activities are three-pronged: getting together

people separated by war or conflicts and facilitating the exchange of letters and cables between them, visiting detainees (its mandate allows visit of security detainees only) and disseminating information about the principles and laws of the Geneva Convention.

The last activity is done through specific programmes to get these principles known either to specific groups or to the general public.

It entails organising seminars and giving lectures, as was the case with the future policemen, former Palestine Liberation Army (PLA) officers, to work in Gaza, or the peacekeeping corps that left for Croatia (the last one three weeks ago) and which were told about the humanitarian law applicable in peacekeeping action.

Every Thursday, according to Mr. Gerber, school children are given a lecture, in cooperation with the Red Crescent society, informing them on the activities of each member of the organisation.

The ICRC staff, which in the Kingdom counts 15 to 20 Jordanians and six Swiss, and the expenses, are funded by every government signatory to the Geneva Convention, by the Red Cross and Red Crescent authorities in different countries and by private donors.

The yearly budget varies according to the need.

In its desire to make sure that the provisions of the Geneva Convention are not violated and that basic human rights are not abused,

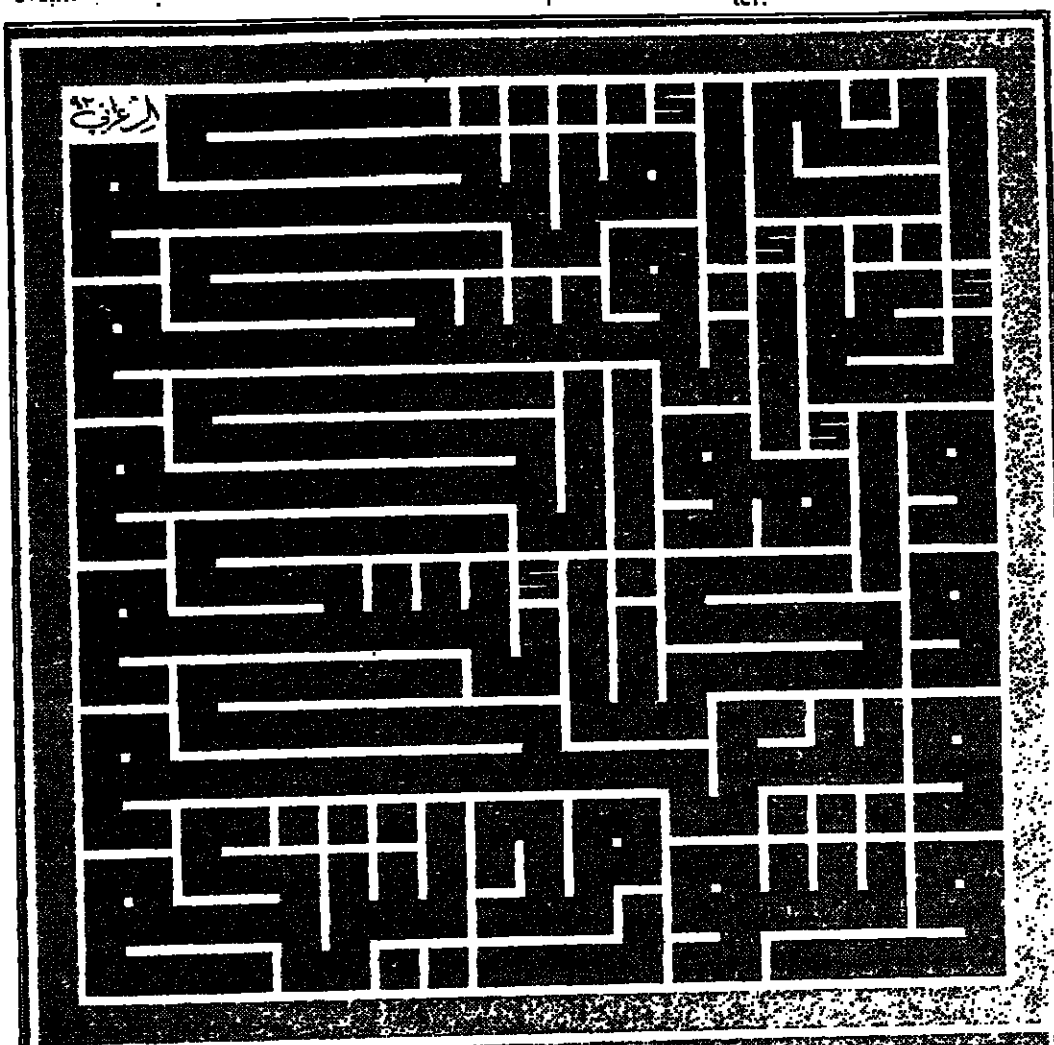
the committee resorts to means of information of which the 1994 calendar is one example.

It is the second, as in 1993 there was one depicting events in the Arab and Muslim World's history.

lim World's history.

This year's calendar, probably inspired by wars raging on in different parts of the world, stresses particularly on human values universally known and accepted.

As present stems from the past and the future is based on the present, the ICRC hopes that the past values would be adopted by the present generation, sparing the future misery and disaster.



One page of calligraphy in ICRC's 1994 calendar

King says peace accord possible this year or next

(Continued from page 1)

of the foreign minister Norway, that this is not the role. This is the role of the king and the Palestinians. Do you agree with that? Shouldn't U.S. do more, sir? And did not advise the president to more when you saw him on TV?

Obviously the United States very important element in the parties in the region at peace. But in terms of Oslo agreement, it was an agreement reached between the PLO and the Israelis. And I really hope they can work out all the details that are needed with the support of the United States, and all of us, in fact.

But you don't want President Clinton and the State Department to do any more in effort to push this process than they're doing now, that what you're telling us.

What I'd like is exactly the opposite. I'd like continued trust and concern and the role of a partnership to continue to exist and manifest itself in the difficult times and at this year, very crucial moment.

Q: Your Majesty, Yasser Arafat, the head of the PLO, has come in for some criticism on the way he has conducted the negotiations with the Israelis. Do you personally have confidence in Mr. Arafat?

A: I think that this is up to the Palestinians to decide, his Palestinian constituency. But I have tried to advise him, to the best of my ability, to try to realise that he has a changed role now. He represents Palestinians both in the occupied territories and in the diaspora. They should all be a part of the coming phase in terms of their views and feelings, particularly those who have endured 26 years of occupation, and at the same time, hopefully that we'll be able to delegate responsibility so that people are able to see progress and movement in dealing with the many problems that should be addressed, particularly when withdrawal begins. There has to be immediately a qualitative change in the lives of people that means the beginning of peace.

Q: Do you think he has taken that advice that he should alter and change his role?

A: I believe that essentially this

is what he has heard from me in the frankest possible way. He has also heard it from and is hearing it from many friends of Palestine, the Palestinian cause, and Palestinians themselves.

Q: There have been published reports that many Arab leaders are unhappy with Yasser Arafat for demanding Palestinian independence. Do you share that point of view?

A: No, I don't share that point of view at all. I believe that it is the right of the Palestinians to decide what their future state should be and that is a choice, as far as we are concerned in Jordan, that was made in 1974 at the Rabat Arab summit when all the Arab states supported Palestinians and recognising the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the people of Palestine. And we accepted that and have supported it ever since.

Q: One last question on that point, sir. It's been reported that you had issued a virtual ultimatum to Yasser Arafat, saying that he should be more conciliatory, more cooperative in the negotiations. Is that true?

A: We have had recently some very frank exchanges, and I hope that they have helped. Certainly they have helped in getting us to a point where we have agreement on a number of essential elements regarding Palestinian-Jordanian relations and our role in helping the people in the occupied territories regarding banks, for example, that are in the open.

Q: Your Majesty, the foreign minister of Syria, Mr. Sharaa, journeyed to Amman, the capital of Jordan, in the last few days to report on his meeting, on President Assad's meeting with President Clinton, to your brother Crown Prince Hassan. Tell us, sir, what did the two presidents agree to?

A: I have the impression that the meeting went very, very well, that there were very frank talks. And I believe that the Syrian position has been made clear by President Assad in the terms of a real desire and commitment to the cause of a just, durable peace, a comprehensive peace; but also that Syria is prepared to ratify a peace treaty when it recovers its lost territory and when that problem is solved.

Q: Well, do you think it surprising, in view of what you just said, that the Israeli government, from Prime Minister Rabin on down, has been very, very cautious in assessing the Clinton-Assad meeting in Geneva? They don't seem very impressed.

A: I believe that the results of the meeting were very encouraging. This is what I've heard from President Assad. I'd spoken to him before and I have heard from him since, and also from President Clinton, whom I had the pleasure of meeting a short while ago.

Q: So can you tell us, sir, that you would expect some kind of beginning of serious negotiations for Israel to get off the Golan Heights and for Syria to give Israel true peace in the next few weeks?

A: I hope that this would be the case.

Q: Hope. But what's your prediction?

A: I don't have all the details, but I believe that negotiations are going to begin very, very shortly. And I think they will be at much more serious and determined level.

Q: Just one more on that, Your Majesty. Are you convinced that Israel, in fact, will withdraw from the Golan Heights entirely? Are you convinced of that, sir?

A: I know that the Golan Heights are of a Syrian territory. And obviously the question is territory for peace. That's part of 242. Beyond that, how it will be worked out is something for the negotiators, I believe, to ascertain.

Q: You met on Friday with President Clinton. You have been critical in the past of some American Presidents for tilting too much toward Israel. How do you assess President Clinton in that regard?

A: I am most impressed. I believe that he is a genuine person. He has already got at the tips of his hands all the information regarding the area. He has studied. He's looked into all the problems, the different points of view. And I believe that he is determined to do whatever he can, together with the United States, to help bring about a just, honourable, lasting peace in our region.

Q: Do you think he has a mindset that is even-handed as between the Arab side and the Israeli side?

A: I believe he has great integrity and he's able to see the different views. And the challenge, I suppose, is to try to reconcile them in the times ahead.

Q: Continuing to look at the overview, sir, is this a — have the Arabs and the Israelis embarked on an irreversible procedure toward peace, or are we at a critical phase now that it could go either way, in your opinion?

A: As far as I am concerned, I am totally committed for it to going one way, and that is the way towards peace. I think that if it goes any other way, it would be the end for the entire region.

Madrid; we, the Palestinians and all the other parties to the conflict. Later on, Oslo saw the Palestinians move ahead and assume their own responsibilities regarding their rights on their soil. We supported that. We ratified the agenda. So we are moving on our own, really. We are looking at this agenda and we hope that we will cover all the items there.

We have a difference, I believe, with Israel in the fact that we have been invited to ratify a peace treaty. We would like to see what that peace treaty contains, and we would like to work up from the issues that are there to have the crowning achievement be the peace treaty. When we are ready and when our efforts are successful and completed, I believe we would have peace.

Q: Would you say to us, sir, there is no chance of Jordan ever signing a separate peace treaty with Israel under any conditions if the negotiations on the West Bank and Gaza are unsuccessful?

A: I certainly hope they will be successful, and I certainly hope at the same time that we will be able to cover the Jordanian-Israeli differences and problems that beset both sides. And obviously there is a dimension that links us to the Palestinian-Israeli effort at this stage. I hope things will move, and I'm sure they will move.

Q: Your Majesty, excuse me. It is impossible that you would sign a treaty with Israel without progress and some kind of a solution on the West Bank. Is that what you're telling us?

A: Let me put it another way. I believe that a solution is coming, and I believe that we will ratify a peace treaty probably at the end of this year or maybe next year.

Q: Your Majesty, one of the low points, perhaps the lowest points in the long and friendly relationship between your

Kingdom and the United States, came during the Gulf war. Do you feel now that the United States attitude in trying to make peace with Iraq and Saddam Hussein, or do you think that's impossible?

A: I wouldn't care to comment on this particular problem. I certainly have worried and have been very, very deeply concerned about the fate of the people of Iraq so far in their suffering that grows. But I'm sure this problem will be resolved.

Q: Are you ever in touch with Saddam Hussein?

A: I haven't been in touch recently.

Q: One other point, Your Majesty. The Iranian government has sent a very large diplomatic mission to your country, to Amman, the capital of Jordan. It's headed by an ambassador who was active in the takeover of the U.S. embassy in Beirut. Is there any chance, sir, as I'm told, that you would like that mission from Iran reduced because the fundamentalists who occupy that embassy are not for peace, they are against peace?

A: Nothing has happened in that direction so far. And the ambassador is in Jordan and he's behaving as an ambassador should so far. But we are watching, obviously, the dimension of our relations with Iran. We would have liked them to be based on an agreement, clear at the highest levels as to where the green lines are, where the red lines are, where our differences are. And I hope that this will come at some point. But in the meantime, we will not permit our country to be jeopardised in terms of its internal sovereignty.

Q: Are they agitating?

A: I don't think they are at the moment. We haven't seen anything that would suggest that.

Q: Your Majesty, the United States secretary of commerce, Ron Brown, was in Cairo on Thursday and he said the following: "The Arab Boycott of Israel is coming apart." Do you agree with that?

A: I think inevitably it will come about in the context of progress towards achieving peace. But there are several areas that have to be covered. If you talk about, for example, Jordan and Israel, we have to work out a balance in terms of our trade and our — they have a protectionist approach towards their products. They have denied us the chance that they would wish for their products to come into our area. All these things have to be worked out, particularly with regard to the Palestinian dimension. But regarding foreign companies operating in the area, I think that is changing and altering in the right direction.

Q: Do you think that progress can be made there before an agreement, peace agreements are signed?

A: Regarding outside com-

panies?

A: Yes.

A: I believe it's happening gradually.

Q: Your Majesty — excuse me, sir. Your Majesty, B.B. Netanyahu, the head of the Likud party, was in Washington this past week and made the statement that if he were prime minister, he would not return one inch of land on the Golan Heights to Syria. Would you tell us, sir, do you think a switch in party control in Israel would endanger the peace process?

A: If this is their approach, obviously it would.

A: It would.

Q: Could you amplify that, sir?

A: Well, then it would mean that a very serious obstacle would be placed in the path of peace. And what we are searching for is a comprehensive peace in the region, which includes Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, the Palestinian dimension, Israel, together with everyone else.

Q: And Prime Minister Rabin's immediate political future depends on success, doesn't it?

A: I believe that.

Arafat, Peres to meet again in Davos

(Continued from page 1)

deal was held in Oslo Saturday. The money from the fund will go to the future autonomous regions in Gaza and Jericho, Mr. Godal said.

Mr. Peres and Mr. Arafat in their discussions here a lower-level negotiations in the last week ran into trouble over who would control the autonomous borders and the autonomous Jericho area.

The two parties cannot agree control of border crossings between the Gaza Strip and Jericho and Jordan. The PLO is also demanding a role in the autonomous area Jericho.

The size of the future autonomous area Jericho is another stumbling block. Israel proposed an area of 50 square kilometres for Jericho, while the PLO wants up to six times that.

The United States hopes the quick progress in their is on Palestinian autonomy, Secretary of State Warren Christopher said here earlier.

At a working breakfast with Mr. Peres, Mr. Christopher said: "We hope they move rapidly" towards implementing the autonomy deal.

"We have been urging both the parties to complete the process as soon as possible," he added.

Mr. Christopher also urged the parties to "take concrete steps that people can feel on ground are highly desired."

But neither side had asked Washington "to serve as intermediary," he said.

But U.S. officials were sceptical that anything would be accomplished over the weekend.

State Department spokesman Mike McCurry said: "Based on discussions, there clearly are differences between positions on the two sides."

Delegates from the Israeli side were more positive.

"I'm just as hopeful for a solution now as I was when the Oslo agreement was signed," one delegate said.

With Mr. Peres seated at his side, Mr. Christopher said: "Clearly we hope they move rapidly."

"We've been urging them to take steps... I think the foreign minister and I would have common ground that anything that can be done to take concrete steps that could be felt on the ground by the people there is highly desirable," he said.

Asked if either or both sides have been "foot-dragging," Mr. Christopher said: "I'm not going to characterise it... I'm going to be urging both parties to come to agreement because I think tangible progress on the ground is essential."

The Israeli foreign minister had an informal supper on Friday night with Mr. Arafat in a tightly guarded hotel in central Oslo.

Mr. Christopher held private talks with Mr. Arafat on Saturday morning after his breakfast with Mr. Peres.

Q: Your Majesty, the foreign minister of Syria, Mr. Sharaa, journeyed to Amman, the capital of Jordan, in the last few days to report on his meeting, on President Assad's meeting with President Clinton, to your brother Crown Prince Hassan. Tell us, sir, what did the two presidents agree to?

A: I have the impression that the meeting went very, very well, that there were very frank talks. And I believe that the Syrian position has been made clear by President Assad in the terms of a real desire and commitment to the cause of a just, durable peace, a comprehensive peace; but also that Syria is prepared to ratify a peace treaty when it recovers its lost territory and when that problem is solved.

Q: Well, do you think it surprising, in view of what you just said, that the Israeli government, from Prime Minister Rabin on down, has been very, very cautious in assessing the Clinton-Assad meeting in Geneva? They don't seem very impressed.

A: I believe that the results of the meeting were very encouraging. This is what I've heard from President Assad. I'd spoken to him before and I have heard from him since, and also from President Clinton, whom I had the pleasure of meeting a short while ago.

Q: So can you tell us, sir, that you would expect some kind of beginning of serious negotiations for Israel to get off the Golan Heights and for Syria to give Israel true peace in the next few weeks?

A: I hope that this would be the case.

Q: Hope. But what's your prediction?

A: I don't have all the details, but I believe that negotiations are going to begin very, very shortly. And I think they will be at much more serious and determined level.

Q: Just one more on that, Your Majesty. Are you convinced that Israel, in fact, will withdraw from the Golan Heights entirely? Are you convinced of that, sir?

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A: As far as I am concerned, I am totally committed for it to going one way, and that is the way towards peace. I think that if it goes any other way, it would be the end for the entire region.

Q: It would be a disaster?

A: It would be a disaster.

Q: Well, let me ask you this. Your Majesty, if the PLO-Israeli talks cannot get back on track and there can't be a deal on Jericho and Gaza and the beginnings of Palestinian independence, will you sign a treaty with Israel, between Jordan and Israel? Can you wait forever for the Palestinians?

A: Sir, we started at the same point in time. We started at

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G.M.'s Adam Opel made significant loss in 1993

FRANKFURT (R) — Adam Opel A.G., the German subsidiary of General Motors (G.M.), has said extraordinary charges had forced it into a significant loss in 1993. The company said the one-off burdens included 160 million marks (\$91.5 million) of costs associated with short-time working.

Redundancy payments and early retirement had cost a further 350 million marks (\$200.1 million) and currency-related losses 380 million (\$217.2 million), it said in a statement.

However, it said that G.M.'s European operation as a whole remained profitable.

Opel said that despite continued weakness in the vehicle market, it was confident that it would be able to report a profit again in 1994. It made a 1992 profit of 202 million marks (\$115.5 million).

The German car maker said its 1993 turnover fell to around 22 billion marks (\$12.6 billion) from 29.2 billion (\$16.7 billion) a year earlier.

It said the decline was due to a drop in new registrations and the impact of model changes involving the Corsa and Omega and the winding down of the Senator model programmes.

Investment totalled 1.3 billion marks (\$740 million) in 1993, up slightly from 1.23 billion (\$700 million) in 1992.

Jordanians lose interest in trading Iraqi currency

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The already low trading in Iraqi dinars in the local market has completely dried up, with speculators hanging on to their holding of the embattled currency, which has plunged to an all-time low against the U.S. dollar.

"There are no buyers and sellers of Iraqi dinars in Amman," said a dealer. "People here are taking their cues from Baghdad, where no one is dealing in the currency anymore."

Reports from the Iraqi capital said Saturday that the black market rate was 190 dinars to the American dollar compared with 160 to 170 dinars two weeks ago. The official rate remained \$3.2 to the dollar.

"The situation is pathetic," Marwan Al Alami of the Alami Exchange House said. "We were expecting this to happen because of the deteriorating economic situation in Iraq," he was quoted as saying by the

Associated Press.

But bankers who keep a close watch on the Iraqi economy said the plunge was mainly brought about by speculators' shifts against the backdrop of receding chances of a quick easing or lifting of the international sanctions against Iraq.

It was earlier expected that there could be an easing of the sanctions before mid-1994 after Iraq accepted long-term monitoring of its weapons programme as part of ceasefire resolutions at the end of the 1991 war over Kuwait.

But Rolf Ekeus, head of the

U.N. Special Commission charged with eliminating Iraq's long-range weapons programme, said last week that he would not be able to certify that Iraq was fully abiding by the Gulf ceasefire resolutions before the end of the year.

Mr. Ekeus' comments, coupled with similar comments by the U.S. representative to the U.N., Madeline Albright, appeared to deal a severe blow to Iraqis' hopes of an end to the economic plight caused by the sanctions.

Another element in the plunge in the value of the Iraqi dinar was also uncontrolled distribution of locally printed

currency without central bank cover.

"We should not forget that the Iraqi government has been flooding its money market with locally printed currency without sufficient reserves," Mr. Alami said.

In the local market, the last quote for the Iraqi dinar, one week ago, was 5.5 to six fils each before interest in the currency dried up altogether.

"Those who have Iraqi dinars are holding on to it hoping that the plunge is only temporary and it is only a matter of time before it recovers," said a banking official. On the other

hand, he added, those who may have an interest are fearful that the plunge could be permanent.

Some analysts expect the Iraqi dinar to go down to 200 or 225 dinars to the dollar, a rate they believe is more realistic in view of Iraq's monetary situation.

But others contradict the view, if only because no accurate figure is available on the status of Iraq's currency and gold reserves.

"There can be no prediction on the course of the dinar with any degree of accuracy," said the banking official. "No one

knows how much reserves Iraq is left with and no one knows when and how Iraq might be able to raise more funds."

According to Iraq-watching diplomats, the dinar could go up if Iraq agrees to the U.N.-offered one-time sale of oil worth \$1.6 billion to pay for U.N. costs and for humanitarian needs of the Iraqi people.

But Iraq has been steadily refusing to accept the offer. There is no indication whether Baghdad would change its mind in view of the expectations that the sanctions would not be even eased before the end of the year.

China's rural unemployed number 140m

BEIJING (R) — China has said almost one in three of its rural workforce, or about 140 million people, was unemployed.

The People's Daily quoted Labour Vice-Minister Zhu Jiazhen as saying the country

had a rural workforce of 450 million, accounting for 74 per cent of the national total, but only 93.4 million hectares (231 million acres) of arable land.

This land provides work for only 200 million at most, with a further 110 million employed

in rural industrial enterprises and services industries, he said.

An army of unemployed is concentrated in major cotton- and grain-growing areas and in the underdeveloped centre and west of the country, he said.

Authorities are preparing for the annual flood of migrant labourers who return home during Chinese New Year next month and travel on to cities in search of work, putting a huge strain on the fragile transport system.

Mr. Zhu said the government had drawn up a three-

year plan to manage this flow of labour from the countryside to the cities, with registration, information networks and contacts between providers and users of labour.

Rural enterprises have been booming since the early 1980s, absorbing 12.6 million new workers a year from 1984 to 1988.

AMMAN FINANCIAL MARKET				
HOUSING BANK CENTER - AMMAN - JORDAN				
TELEPHONE: 66010 / 660110				
GRAND TOTAL: 6,056,332				
COMPANY'S NAME	TRADED VOLUME	PREV. CLOSING PRICE	OFFERING PRICE	NEW CLOSING PRICE
AMMAN BANK	389,810	190.100	191.000	191.500
JORDAN NATIONAL BANK	363,756	6.990	6.990	7.340
BANK OF JORDAN	10,011	4.000	4.000	4.950
MIDDLE EAST INVESTMENT BANK	12,611	1.000	1.000	1.150
INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT BANK	37,040	3.150	3.150	3.150
THE HOUSING BANK	444,876	6.900	6.900	6.900
JORDAN EXCHANGE BANK	271,118	2.220	2.220	3.320
JORDAN CREDIT BANK	278,314	2.220	2.220	2.220
JORDAN TRADING BANK	65,819	6.740	6.740	6.800
JORDAN BANK FOR BANKING & INVESTMENT	34,700	4.200	4.200	4.350
POSTBANK	2,110	2.500	2.500	2.500
JORDAN INVESTMENT & FINANCE BANK	3,750	7.500	7.500	7.850
AMMAN BANK FOR INVESTMENT	475,682	1.970	1.970	2.010
PHILADELPHIA INVESTMENT BANK	114,039	2.440	2.440	2.480
PHILADELPHIA INVESTMENT BANK	11,650	2.390	2.390	2.390
JORDAN INSURANCE	62,864	3.640	3.640	3.750
INTERNATIONAL INSURANCE	272	3.790	3.790	3.800
PHILADELPHIA INSURANCE	1,960	4.540	4.540	4.540
JORDANIAN ECONOMIC POWER	497,743	2.560	2.560	2.560
VEHICLES OWNERS ASSOCIATION	23,803	7.500	7.500	7.400
AMMAN TRADING & INVESTMENT BANK	12,611	4.950	4.950	5.200
JORDAN NATIONAL SHIPPING LINE	26,775	2.100	2.100	2.200
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PHILADELPHIA INSURANCE	1,960	4.540	4.540	4.540
JORDANIAN ECONOMIC POWER	497,743	2.560	2.560	2.560
VEHICLES OWNERS ASSOCIATION	23,803	7.500	7.500	7.400
AMMAN TRADING & INVESTMENT BANK	12,611	4.950	4.950	5.200
JORDAN NATIONAL SHIPPING LINE	26,775	2.100	2.100	2.200
JORDAN TRADING & INVESTMENT BANK	12,611	4.950	4.950	5.200
PHILADELPHIA INVESTMENT BANK	11,650	2.390	2.390	2.390
JORDAN INSURANCE	62,864	3.640	3.640	3.750
INTERNATIONAL INSURANCE	272	3.790	3.790	3.800
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Pressure grows for review of international role in Bosnia

SARAJEVO (R) — U.N. chief Boutros Ghali confirmed he was prepared to order selective air strikes in Bosnia if needed, but Western governments were openly debating a troop pullout from the shattered former Yugoslav republic.

France, obviously stung by Dr. Ghali's sacking of a French general commanding U.N. peacekeepers in ex-Yugoslavia, said the United Nations was in crisis and accused its civilian staff of being out of their depth dealing with the Bosnian war.

French Defence Minister Francois Leotard said the dumping of General Jean Cot, who will leave his post in March, indicated a crisis within the international organisation.

"The U.N. gobbles up its generals. After dumping a Turk, an Italian and a Belgian, now it's the turn of a Frenchman," Mr. Leotard told French Television Friday night.

"If there is a crisis today it is not between France and the U.N. but within the U.N. which cannot handle such complex situations (as Bosnia)," he said.

The French minister added that the U.N.'s civilian command staff in New York was "not adapted to this kind of situation."

Gen. Cot had publicly clashed with Dr. Ghali, saying the U.N. chief rejected his repeated requests for authority to call air strikes against Serb

gunners besieging Sarajevo.

Earlier Friday Dr. Ghali announced he was ready to order air strikes if asked by his special representative in former Yugoslavia, Yasushi Akashi.

"I am in favour of using air force so that we will be able to implement the resolutions of the United Nations," Dr. Ghali told reporters at a news conference in the Hague.

But the secretary-general, who directed Mr. Akashi Tuesday to prepare detailed plans on possible air strikes, referred only to using air power if Canadian troops in the eastern Muslim enclave of Srebrenica could not be replaced by a Dutch battalion.

Bosnian Serb leaders this week tried to defuse the Srebrenica issue by lifting objections to the troop swap.

Dr. Ghali made no mention of a request for immediate action from Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic for strikes against Bosnian Serbs to help lift the siege of Sarajevo or to open Tuzla Airport in north-central Bosnia.

Apart from Srebrenica, NATO leaders at a summit last week threatened air strikes to open up Tuzla to airlifts to assist delivery of humanitarian aid to the Muslim enclave.

Frustration following this week's collapse in Geneva of yet another round of peace talks to end Bosnia's 21-month war led outgoing commander of U.N. troops in Bosnia, Belgian General Francis Bri-

quemont, to call for the negotiations to be ditched.

"We must stop talking to people who do not respect their signature... our politicians must apply pressure so that we do not allow ourselves to be humiliated," he said.

In Sarajevo, Bosnian Prime Minister Haris Silajdzic said chances of a negotiated peace for Bosnia were slim following the rejection by Bosnian Serbs of Muslim demands for the return of land which had Muslim majority populations before the war.

The besieged Bosnian capital was quiet. Sarajevo Radio and Belgrade-based Tanjug News Agency reported sporadic clashes in some central and northern Bosnian towns.

British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd, visiting British U.N. soldiers in Vitez, central Bosnia, acknowledged that the withdrawal of troops was under consideration but said there was no question of British forces being pulled out immediately.

"This is something that has to be properly weighed... There are other contributing troops about. These are not things we can decide for ourselves," Mr. Hurd told reporters.

In Paris, French Foreign Minister Alain Juppe called for a joint diplomatic initiative by all major powers with influence in former Yugoslavia to try to make Bosnia's Muslim-led government, Serbs and Croats make peace.

He said he would discuss the issue with U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher Monday after telephone contacts with European Union counterparts Friday.

The international response to the impasse in former Yugoslavia was further complicated Friday when Russia's new parliament, dominated by Communists, conservatives and extreme nationalists, passed a pro-Serb motion by an overwhelming majority, opposing NATO air strikes and calling for U.N. sanctions against rump Yugoslavia to be lifted.

In Brussels, the European Union (EU) threw its weight firmly behind EU peace envoy Lord David Owen Friday, asking him to keep working for peace in Bosnia.

In a statement issued in Brussels, the 12 EU governments distanced themselves from the European parliament's call Thursday for Lord Owen's replacement.

"The European Union supports the efforts of the co-chairman of the steering committee on the international conference on former Yugoslavia to bring about a negotiated peaceful settlement of the conflict in Bosnia-Herzegovina accepted by all parties," the statement said.

"It expresses the hope that Lord Owen and Mr. (Thorvald) Stoltenberg will continue to offer their valuable services in their endeavours to implement their mandate," it added.



Two unidentified girls carry food from an earthquake food relief distribution centre in Los Angeles, California (AFP photo)

U.S. officials scramble to speed quake response

LOS ANGELES (R) — The death toll from the Los Angeles earthquake rose to 55 Friday as officials scrambled to speed aid to victims of a disaster that has forced thousands into makeshift camps since it struck four days ago.

More than 20,000 people were left homeless by Monday's pre-dawn quake which registered 6.6 on the Richter Scale, the most powerful to rock the second-largest U.S. city in 20 years.

Several hundred people appeared before dawn in front of disaster relief stations to get a coveted spot on lines that were expected to become blocks long as the day wore on.

Wearing blankets around their shoulders to keep warm, victims said one of the things they wanted most was a hot shower.

The Los Angeles County Coroner's office early Friday revised the death toll from the quake upward to 55. The toll of those injured rose to 5,400 people, with 700 having sustained serious injuries.

Forecasts of rain for the weekend, meanwhile, stepped up the pressure on relief officials to move thousands of quake victims out of the tent city encampments that have cropped up in parks and other areas around the city.

"Our hope is... that people will not have to be out in the parks when the forecast of rain Saturday begins to make its appearance," Housing Secretary Henry Cisneros told reporters.

Mail delivery, which was halted immediately after Monday's quake, was expected to resume Friday to all parts of the region, postal authorities said.

Tent city residents spent a fourth night exposed to cold, damp temperatures. They are without adequate food and water, living under unsanitary conditions, and medical experts said they face a risk of dysentery and diarrhoea.

"We need to get these people out of the parks. It's unhealthy out there," said Jackie Tatum, general manager of the city's Department of Parks and Recreation.

The National Guard is expected to start erecting tents, equipped with electricity and offering better protection than what residents have cobbled together for themselves.

On Thursday, a day after President Bill Clinton visited the quake-ravaged area promising an efficient response, victims complained of standing in line for hours outside emergency assistance centres and coming out empty-handed.

"I need a place for my kids for warmth and security because they're scared at night," said Marsha Crdini, 31, a divorced mother of two young children. Her family has been living in a car since their two-bedroom apartment was destroyed.

In mid-afternoon, quake victims stood three abreast in a quarter-mile-long (0.4-km-long) line at one disaster centre, many with young children and plastic water jugs in tow.

The centres were designed as "one-stop" offices for disaster aid, where victims can apply for loans and grants, replace driver's licences, seek tax relief from the Internal Revenue Service and even talk to a local tax assessor.

"I was waiting here for almost six hours. I don't have a place to live and I have to come back tomorrow," said Anna Sanchez, 40. "Too much talking, no action."

But officials of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, mindful of the criticism they faced in the aftermath of hurricane Andrew in 1992, pleaded for patience, saying they needed more time to ease the city's plight.

Premier's aide casts more doubts on Russian reforms

MOSCOW (R) — Prospects for radical Russian reforms faded dramatically when a senior official aide to Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin revealed that the new cabinet's programme contained only "elements of Western market economics."

The comments by Mr. Chernomyrdin's press secretary, Valentin Sergeyev, reported by ITAR-TASS news agency late Friday, gave the clearest sign yet that Russia's commitment to market forces is waning as conservatives gain the upper hand in government.

President Boris Yeltsin's chief aide, Viktor Ilyushin, earlier dismissed suggestion that the Russian leader was abandoning serious economic reform.

But Mr. Sergeyev left scant room for misunderstanding, quoting Mr. Chernomyrdin as saying "the mechanical transfer of Western economic methods to Russian soil has caused more harm than good."

His comments only confirmed suspicions of Western economists, who said the government would shun proven routes to stabilisation and industrial revival prolonging the pain of economic reform and endangering new international cash inflows.

The government met earlier in the day for the first time and made clear it favoured more moderate reforms, promising to look for ways to keep struggling enterprises above water. This would inevitably mean relaxing tight monetary policy.

Mr. Chernomyrdin told Interfax News Agency that priority had to be given to stopping the slump in production.

"What sort of reforms or democracy can one talk about at a time when huge enterprises and private businesses come to a standstill while coal miners, oil workers, doctors and journalists go on strike," he asked.

"No matter how progressive it might be, no theory can by itself salvage a huge country from shortages of food, energy and commodities and, by definition, from social upheavals which will make the reforms next to impossible."

"If we fail to boost production, we will fail to salvage the newly emerging market economy."

He sought to reassure Western creditors, saying Russia would continue to pay interest on its \$80 billion foreign debt.

Radical reformers like former Economics Minister Yegor Gaidar and former Finance Minister Boris Fyodorov, flag-bearers of Western-style reforms who left the government this week, say the new policies will lead to hyperinflation and disaster.

"The course of reform worked out by the Russian government, and approved by the president, of course contains elements of Western market economics but mainly takes into account the special characteristics of our state, people and Russian traditions," Mr. Sergeyev quoted Mr. Chernomyrdin as saying.

Lorena Bobbitt sent to psychiatric evaluation

MANASSAS, Virginia (AP) — Lorena Bobbitt was committed to a state mental hospital for a psychiatric evaluation after a jury found she was temporarily insane when she cut off her husband's penis with a kitchen knife. Defence lawyers had argued that Mrs. Bobbitt was a "battered wife seized by an irresistible impulse," to cut off her husband's penis on June 23 after he came home from a night of drinking and raped her. Prosecutors called Mrs. Bobbitt's attack a calculated act of revenge.

"This case was not about a penis," defence lawyer Lisa Kemler said after the verdict Friday. "Everyone was so consumed with that. But that's not what this case is really about. It was really about a life." Doctors, as required by Virginia law, will decide if she poses a danger to herself or others. They must report back to the judge within 45 days. Mrs. Bobbitt stood stoically as the verdict was read. One supporter in the courtroom shrieked, her husband, John Bobbitt, was not in court. Bobbitt, 26, was acquitted in November of sexually assaulting his wife. He denied ever beating or raping her.

Woman accused of setting husband's organ ablaze

WAYNESVILLE, North Carolina (AFP) — A woman who allegedly set her husband's penis ablaze with nail polish remover was placed on probation after he refused to testify against her, officials said.

The couple is apparently trying to patch up their relationship, the officials added. Cynthia Mason Gillett, 28, was charged with malicious maiming for the July attack on her 27-year-old husband Gurnham, who suffered burns on his penis, chest, stomach and neck. Investigators never determined the exact motive for the attack, which occurred as Mr. Gillett slept. He is expected to recover fully from his burns. Under an agreement announced by prosecutors Thursday, Mrs. Gillett admitted responsibility, without pleading guilty, to a lesser charge of assault. She was placed on two years' probation. She could have been sentenced to 40 years in prison if she had been convicted of maiming, but her husband refused to testify against her. District Attorney Charles Hipps said. The Gilletts are believed to be back together. Sheriff Tom Alexander said.

Housewife wires husband's organ, electrocutes him

MANILA (AFP) — A Filipina housewife, angered by her drunkard husband, wired his penis to an electrical device used to stun fish while he was asleep and turned it on, electrocuting him, the Manila Times newspaper reported Saturday. The newspaper, which did not specify when the incident happened, said Erlinda De La Cruz, 37, was furious for spending all the money from the sale of three sacks of rice in a local beerhouse. She confronted him when he came home but he became angry and attacked her with a machete, the Times quoted the woman as saying. Mrs. La Cruz fled to a friend's house and came back several hours later to find her husband asleep. She took his illegal fishing device that uses electricity to stun fish, tied it to his penis and pressed the button.

Thai police free 23 teenagers from brothel

BANGKOK (AFP) — Bangkok police have freed 23 girls, all 15 years old, from a brothel in the capital where they were being held prisoners, authorities said Saturday. Most of the girls found Friday in a barricaded room on the third floor of a building in eastern Bangkok were from the country's rural north, police said. Police arrested the brothel owner but a man suspected of luring the girls into prostitution escaped. The police acted on a tip from a Japanese tourist, they said.

Inmate, ex-con wed on death row

STARKE, Florida (AFP) — Love had no bars Friday as a death row inmate and his ex-con bride exchanged vows and wedding rings through a hole in a plastic glass barrier separating them. Condemned inmate Frank Valdes, 52, married Wanda Eads, 31, in a no-frills ceremony.

Hume urges U.K. to clarify peace offer

LONDON (Agencies) — An influential Catholic leader Saturday ridiculed Prime Minister John Major's refusal to clarify for IRA supporters an Anglo-Irish "framework for peace" in Northern Ireland.

John Hume, leader of the Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP), urged Mr. Major to "call Sinn Fein's bluff" and provide "the answers sought by the Irish Republican Army's political wing."

Sinn Fein's president, Gerry Adams, expressed anger Friday night that Mr. Major had rejected his request for clarification of the peace plan announced on Dec. 15 by Mr. Major and Irish Leader Albert Reynolds. It offers the IRA a role in peace negotiations in exchange for a ceasefire.

Mr. Adams derided the declaration as "a masterpiece of ambiguity."

Mr. Major had told Mr. Adams he could take it or leave it — "there can be no question of renegotiation."

His blunt message in a letter to Mr. Adams reflected growing official irritation that Sinn Fein and the IRA have not responded definitively to the talks offer. Some British officials think Sinn Fein's demands for "clarification" are a stalling tactic, others believe the IRA is trying to negotiate without ending its violent campaign against British rule in Northern Ireland.

Mr. Hume told BBC Radio 4 that the government must break the deadlock by responding to Sinn Fein's request for clarification of the joint declaration.

"If the government does not know the difference between clarification and negotiation I do not understand what is between the ears of those in government," Mr. Hume said on the BBC.

Mr. Hume — who has been involved in talks with Mr. Adams — said the "line of communication" should be kept open.

His party, the SDLP, speaks for the most Catholics in Northern Ireland.

In contrast, David Trimble, legal affairs spokesman for the Ulster Unionists who want Northern Ireland to remain a part of Britain, said the government had gone too far already.

"It has put itself in the rather embarrassing position where it has been acting like a suppliant begging this squalid little terrorist group to be nice to it," Mr. Trimble said.

"The government should make it clear that the only thing to do now is to continue the political process and to address the Sinn Fein-IRA as a security problem."

Mr. Adams late Friday accused British Prime Minister John Major of "blocking" the peace effort in Northern Ireland by refusing to clarify the Anglo-Irish declaration on the province.

NEWS IN BRIEF

French Muslim leader slams Chanel

PARIS (R) — The head of France's Muslim community said Friday the Chanel fashion house had committed a "gross and almost scandalous" error in sewing Koranic verses on a revealing bodice, but accepted an apology. Chanel apologised to Muslims Thursday after German model Claudia Schiffer strutted down the catwalk at the Paris summer collections last Saturday in a low-cut, tight black bustier on which Arabic words were embroidered in grey pearls. "It was a gross and almost scandalous mistake by ignorant people who I am sorry to say know nothing of Arabs, of the Koran or of religious principles," Dali Boubakeur, rector of the Paris Mosque, told Reuters. But he added: "I believe Chanel is in good faith when they say they did not do this on purpose." Mr. Boubakeur said he had been invited to meet a caterer for Chanel Saturday. Chanel designer Karl Lagerfeld, who counts many wealthy Arabs among his clients, said Thursday he took the design from a book on India's Taj Mahal Palace. "I'd been told it was a love poem in memory of a Maharani (Indian princess)," he said. Mr. Boubakeur said several worshippers had come to him during Friday prayers at the mosque and asked him to take a stand.

2nd strong quake hits Indonesia

JAKARTA, Indonesia (AP) — A strong earthquake hit the Indonesian island of Sumatra early Saturday, a day after another quake in the eastern part of the country left at least 10 people dead. There were no immediate reports of damage or injuries from Saturday's quake, which measured 5.5 on the Richter Scale and struck just after 1 a.m. (1800 GMT Friday), said an official of the meteorology and geophysics. The quake was centred on the edge of the Indian Ocean, about 390 kilometres (244 miles) west of Jakarta, or about 280 kilometres (175 miles) southeast of the province of Bengkulu. On Friday, a quake with a magnitude of 6.8 on the Richter Scale killed at least 100 people, injured more than 50 and destroyed more than 600 buildings and houses, in the regency of North Maluku, in eastern Indonesia.

Attack on Punjab mosque kills 7

ISLAMABAD (R) — Gunmen hurled a grenade into a crowded mosque in Pakistan's Punjab province Friday and then opened fire on the fleeing congregation, killing seven people and injuring 20, officials said. The motive for the attack by three men on the Shi'ite Mosque in a village 60 kilometres east of Multan was not immediately clear. But Shi'ite and Sunni Muslims have often clashed in Pakistan over religious rituals and interpretation of the faith. Shi'ites comprise about 15 per cent of the Sunni-dominated population of 117 million but are in a majority in neighbouring Iran.

Kravchuk attacks nuclear deal foes

KIEV (R) — President Leonid Kravchuk launched a counter-attack on the Ukrainian parliament Friday, accusing opponents of a deal to rid the country of nuclear arms of seeking to "sign a death warrant" for Ukraine's people. Mr. Kravchuk defended the deal signed in Moscow with the presidents of Russia and the United States, saying it met conditions attached by parliament last November to ratification of the first treaty on nuclear disarmament, START-I. He said deputies who attacked the accord in parliament Thursday had no choice but to act in the country's interests and approve the deal when it comes up for debate next week. "This is a very important accord and we must not reject it," he told Reuters during a tour of Kiev's stock exchange. "Whoever proposes that Ukraine keep its weapons and become a nuclear state is seeking to make Ukraine a hostage to the weapons and sign a death warrant for our people," Mr. Kravchuk's signature on the Moscow deal came under fierce attack from even moderate deputies when parliament resumed its sittings Thursday. Some called for a referendum on the issue, while others said it constituted grounds for impeachment.

Shevardnadze signs CSCE treaty again

PARIS (R) — Georgian leader Eduard Shevardnadze Friday signed the Paris Charter of the Conference for Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) for the second time, two years after signing it on behalf of the former Soviet Union. "I am very happy to be the first person to sign twice, the first time in Russian and now in my native Georgian. This is a symbolic event," Mr. Shevardnadze said after the ceremony at France's Elysee Presidential Palace. Mr. Shevardnadze, who earlier met President Francois Mitterrand, was due to have talks later with visiting United Nations chief Boutros Ghali on the conflict between Georgia and breakaway Abkhazia. Mr. Shevardnadze was Mikhail Gorbachev's foreign minister when the CSCE charter was adopted at a 34-nation summit in Paris in November 1990. Following the break-up of the Soviet Union, Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia, there are now 52 members plus the rump state of Yugoslavia, which is suspended.

N. Korea justifies its snub of nuclear checks

TOKYO (AFP) — North Korea warned Saturday that U.S. pressure for it to allow regular outside inspections of its nuclear facilities could lead to a "catastrophe" and defended its decision not to allow such checks.

The North Korean Workers Party newspaper Rodong Sinmun said that Pyongyang had only "suspended temporarily" its March 1993 decision to withdraw from the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

It added that the country had not yet fully returned to the fact so that it was not subject to regular nuclear safeguards checks by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

"Therefore we are not under obligation to implement the safeguards agreement like a full-fledged signatory," the newspaper said in a commentary carried by the Korean Central News Agency and monitored here.

Rodong Sinmun also pointed out that North Korea had agreed with the United States in New York a few weeks ago to allow "inspection needed merely for the guarantee of the continuity of safeguards."

The commentary described such spot inspections as a new concept originating from "our special position" concerning the nuclear arms control pact.

WASHINGTON (Agencies) — U.S. officials reacted warily Friday to Japan's political upheaval, voicing support for reform but acknowledging that this turbulence could upset bilateral trade talks and cloud an upcoming summit.

"We're looking at the situation in Japan closely," U.S. trade representative Mickey Kantor said. "Obviously it's a fluid situation in which no one is quite sure what the outcome will be."

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Japanese analysts' gloomy assessments of Mr. Hosokawa

said the Tokyo Stock Market could go into a tailspin if the government crisis drags on.

White House spokeswoman Dee Dee Myers pointedly refused to comment on the rejection of Mr. Hosokawa's reform package, which Washington officials consider an internal political matter.

And Mr. Kantor said the trade talks remain on track. "We hope to make progress on these so-called framework talks," he said, after a luncheon speech.

However, the senior economic official said Mr. Clinton has been "extraordinarily supportive" of Mr. Hosokawa and would have welcomed the institution of his reforms.

The Japanese prime minister is betting the political future of his fragile coalition government on the outcome of tough negotiations with the opposition after parliament rejected a key political reform package, analysts said Saturday. Mr. Hosokawa must now rely on the opposition Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) to secure passage of the reforms through the upper house, they said.

Newspaper editorials Saturday reflected on parliament's rejection of the bills and on the future of the popular prime minister.

It is very regrettable that the bills designed to increase the people's trust in politics were rejected by the upper house," the Yomiuri daily said in an editorial.

The Asahi daily described the political situation as "abnormal" and said the possibility of Mr. Hosokawa's resignation or dissolution of the lower house for snap general elections could not be ruled out.

It maintained political reform should be legislated in light of the recent money-related political scandals, which prompted Mr. Hosokawa's election promise of reform.

Mr. Hosokawa said Friday he would not resign or dissolve the 511-member lower house and that he would make further efforts to win parliamentary approval of the government-sponsored bills.

But with the failure of the upper house to grant passage, Mr. Hosokawa must now resort to a vote in both chambers on the basis of agreement reached by a consultative forum.

If a lower house plenary session approves the establishment of the forum, the upper

chamber must respect the decision and 10 selected legislators from each house will decide in negotiations on whether the bills will again be put to the vote.

Approval by more than two-thirds of the 20 selected lawmakers is necessary for a fresh vote on the bills, with a simple majority in each chamber needed to pass them into law.

The LDP, the largest single party, has yet to decide on whether it will agree to the forum, with an increasing number of opposition legislators preferring to go after Mr. Hosokawa and use the issue to force his resignation, political sources said.

Last June, then-Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa from the LDP dissolved the lower chamber for elections following parliament's rejection of his political reform plan.

In a counter move, the coalition is moving to offer concessions to the LDP to bring it to the negotiating table.

The delay of the political reform package puts further pressure on the government, which has given that issue priority over formulation of economic stimulus bill to help revive Japan's lagging economy.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Morocco to play 4 friendlies

RABAT (R) — Morocco will play friendlies against Finland, Luxembourg, Turkey and Canada before the World Cup finals in the United States starting Jun 17. The Royal Moroccan Football Federation said Friday Morocco would take part in a United Arab Emirates tournament from February 2-6, play Finland in Casablanca February 23, Luxembourg away March 23, Turkey in Ankara April 6, and Canada June 1.

Senna and Lehto crash

PARIS (AFP) — Formula One drivers Ayrton Senna and J.J. Lehto escaped injury Friday after spinning off during practice sessions in Estoril and Silverstone. Both men were getting to grips with the cars of their new teams for the 1994 season. Senna at the wheel of a Williams-Renault in Portugal and Lehto driving the Benetton Ford in England. Senna was unhurt after his car spun as he went into the third bend of the Estoril circuit. "I braked and the wheels locked," the Brazilian triple world champion said. "The car spun round and I stopped against the wall of safety tyres. Senna, clearly in buoyant mood, added: "These things happen in Formula One. I wasn't hurt at all, but the car was slightly damaged." Things looked more serious for Lehto as he spun off at the Stowe corner at Silverstone and slammed into a safety barrier at high speed. The Finn was taken to the circuit medical centre. But tests revealed no obvious injury. However, as a precaution, doctors recommended that he wear a neck brace for the time being.

Belgium and Holland bid for Euro 2000

MANCHESTER, England (AFP) — Belgium and Holland officially launched their joint bid to host the European Championships in 2000 here Friday. Alain Courtois, head of the Belgian Football Federation, said: "It's the first time that two countries have come together to present a single candidature for the championships."

World record for Sievinen

HELSINKI (R) — Finland's Jani Sievinen set a swimming short course world record when he won the 200 metres individual medley in one minute 54.65 seconds at the Finnish championships in Kuopio Friday, the Finnish news agency reported. The Finn beat his own mark of 1:55.59 achieved in Malmo, Sweden last February.

Weissflog gets Olympic boost

SAPPORO, Japan (AFP) — Jens Weissflog of Germany soared Saturday to his fourth world cup win this season, boosting his bid for a medal at February's Lillehammer Winter Olympics. "I'm satisfied that I did my best on the second jump," said Weissflog after marking the day's longest jump off the 90 metre normal hill here. Competing in fine weather on the Miyazomori Hill, Weissflog, 29, recorded scores of 86.5 and 90.5 metres for a winning score of 230.5 points. "I have been in a good condition so far this season," the German said. "I will work hard over the coming three weeks to be ready for at least one medal." He boosted his overall world cup points to 170, closing on leader Norway's Espen Bredesen on 89. Bredesen came ninth with 203.5 points from jumps of 86 and 81.5m, after his second spot at the previous event at Liberec, Czech Republic, last week.

Malawi in mystery soccer pull-out

BLANTYRE (AFP) — Malawi mysteriously pulled out of a regional soccer tournament for east and central African nations here Saturday. Malawi Football Association chairman, Ishmail Khamisa, quoted by Saturday's Malawi news, said Malawi had withdrawn from the Confederation of Central Africa Football Association (CECAFA) but gave no reasons. It is believed the move came after Malawian side silver strikers were barred from a regional club championship hosted by Sudan this year for taking too long to confirm their participation. Khamisa said Malawi would now concentrate in playing in the Confederation of Southern African Football Association (COSAFA), which groups southern African national teams including South Africa.

Bernes in move to discredit investigation

MARSEILLE, France (AFP) — Former Olympique Marseille General Manager Jean-Pierre Bernes has accused the magistrate handling the Marseille match-fixing case of interfering with witnesses, judicial sources said here Friday. Bernes claims Bernard Beffy put undue pressure on him in two telephone calls when he was being held in a police cell for questioning. He should only have been questioned in presence of his lawyer. Bernes, right-hand man to Olympique Marseille owner Bernard Tapie, was later charged with trying to bribe three Valenciennes players to throw a match which allowed Marseille to win the league last year.



Germany's Jens Weissflog holds up winner's trophy during an award ceremony after the World Cup Ski Jumping normal hill event in Sapporo, Japan (AFP photo)

NBA ROUNDUP

In Atlanta, Kenny Anderson's 12-footer with 1.3 seconds left in overtime lifted New Jersey to a 113-111 victory over Atlanta Friday night, just the third home loss of the season for the Hawks, but their second straight.

Andrew Lang's 20-footer failed at the buzzer as the Hawks' record at the Omni dropped to 17-3. It was Atlanta's third loss in its last four games.

Derrick Coleman led the Nets, who extended their winning streak to a season-best four, with 30 points and 11 rebounds. Anderson had 24 points and 11 assists.

Dominique Wilkins scored 30 points and Kevin Willis had 27 points and 21 rebounds for the Hawks.

Wilkins gave Atlanta two-point leads three times in the extra period, the last at 8:30. A foul by the baseline for a 111-109 advantage with two minutes to play. Benoit Benjamin tied it 111-111 on a rebound basket with 1:12 to play.

Mookie Blaylock missed an 18-footer in the final half-minute and the Nets got a fresh 24 seconds on the shot clock when Willis was called for a foul with 23.7 seconds to play. Anderson dribbled away most of the time before starting his move with six seconds remaining.

Pistons 118, Heat 98

In Miami, the sharpshooting of Joe Dumars and Terry Mills helped Detroit snap its 14-game losing streak while Miami lost its seventh in a row.

Dumars scored 35 points and Mills 34, a season high for both. Mills hit 14 of 17 shots and Dumars made 14 of 22, including four 3-pointers.

A Pistons loss would have broken the franchise record for the longest losing streak in a single season, set in 1979-80. Steve Smith scored 20 points for the Heat, whose losing streak has come after coach Kevin Loughery won his 59th game.

The Pistons, who made 60 per cent of their shots, were outscored by an average of 13 points during their 14-game skid, but they took the lead for good late in the first quarter against Miami. Mills scored six points during a 12-0 run that made it 68-49 midway through the third period.

Celtics 124, Warriors 116

In Boston, Boston beat Golden State for a season-high four-game winning streak after losing 13 of 15.

The Celtics, who ended a team-record seven-game home losing streak Sunday night against Denver, turned a 61-50 halftime lead into a 73-52 bulge as Dino Radja and Dee Brown had six points each in a 12-0 run.

But the Warriors started the fourth quarter with a 16-6 surge, closing to 101-98 with 7:25 left. They came no closer, trailing by three to 12 points the rest of the way.

Brown scored 22 points and Radja 21 for the Celtics, who made 53.6 per cent of their shots, the first time in nine games they hit more than 50 per cent.

The Warriors, who ended a season-best five-game winning streak, were led by Chris Mullin and Latrell Sprewell with 23 each.

In the first half, Boston centre Robert Parish, the NBA's oldest player at 40, outscored Golden State centre Chris Webber, they youngest at 21, 14-0. Each finished with 18 points, but Parish held a 14-3 rebounding advantage.

Magic 106, Knicks 103

In Orlando, Fla., Shaquille O'Neal scored 37 points and blocked a potential game-winning shot by Patrick Ewing with 16 seconds left, keeping Orlando ahead of New York.

Irelands drawn together in European contest

MANCHESTER, England (AFP) — Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland, placed in the same qualifying group for this year's World Cup finals, were drawn together again for the 1996 European Championship qualifiers here Saturday.

The republic just reached the United States, but Northern Ireland failed to make it a hat-trick of successful qualifications before Billy Bingham stood down as manager.

The Group Six matches between the two countries will undoubtedly provide security headaches, as they did for the World Cup qualifiers.

They will be matched by worries in Group Four, where Croatia and Slovenia from the old Yugoslavia face each other.

Italy, the 1968 champions, head that section and were immediately installed as 9-2 favourites by British bookmakers William Hill after being drawn against five fledgling football nations from the former eastern bloc in Ukraine, Croatia, Lithuania, Estonia and Slovenia.

England, who as hosts do not have to qualify, are 5-1 joint second favourites with Germany, the only nation to have won the European crown twice.

First, though, the world champions must progress from a section that includes Wales, who beat the Germans in a 1991 European championship qualifier in Cardiff, Bulgaria, Georgia, Albania and Moldova.

Reigning champions Denmark were put in Group Two and face stiff competition from Spain and Belgium to go through to the finals.

Fifteen countries will qualify from the eight groups, consisting of the group winners and the six best runners-up. The final place will be decided by a play-off at a neutral venue between the two other group second placed teams.

Wilander keeps rolling on in Australian Open

MELBOURNE (AP) — The wry grin, the double-handed backhand and the steely resolve remain the same.

Mats Wilander is a little older, a little wiser and still a very fine tennis player.

Wilander, emerging from two years of self-imposed exile, continued his remarkable comeback Saturday when he downed German Alexander Mronz in a five-set marathon at the Australian Open to advance to the round of 16.

The Swede, back on court because he became bored with retirement, beat Mronz 4-6, 5-7, 6-3, 6-4, 6-3 in four hours and 18 minutes of centre court drama.

Stefan Edberg, Wilander's long-time friend and rival, also advanced with a comprehensive 6-2, 6-1, 6-1 victory over thoroughly frustrated Frenchman Fabrice Santoro.

Edberg was in awesome touch against an opponent without any weapons with which to hurt him. His coach, Tony Pickard, said the No. 4 seed made only six mistakes in the match.

Wilander, 29, won the first of his three Australian Open titles 11 years ago on the grass courts of Kooyong.

His performance Saturday at the National Tennis Center evoked memories of his glory days, when he won seven Grand Slams. His strokes are still smooth.

Wilander used his deep double-handed backhand and some delicate lobs to claw his way back from a two-set deficit and delight a crowd that was almost universally on his side.

Now ranked 322 in the world and fresh from a stint as a rock musician, Wilander was awarded a wild card into the open because his ranking wasn't good enough. He had lost in the first round of his last two tournaments — in Adelaide and Sydney — and was 3-9 in his comeback coming into the event. Two of those wins came at last year's U.S. Open.

He got a lot of help from Mronz, who double-faulted 10 times, and from a seagull that distracted Mronz in the final

set.

The bird, diving toward the court as Wilander prepared to serve at deuce with the games tied 1-1, screamed just as Wilander hit the ball. The startled Mronz watched an ace go right by him.

Wilander has now played eight five-set matches at the Australian Open and won them all. He's 24-12 in his career when matches go the full distance.

"To play a tight tennis match is more fun than anything else," Wilander said. "I'm just trying to get the rhythm and the feel."

"A grind (like today) is fun for me too."

Mronz was left to rue a missed opportunity.

"I was sure I'd win after two sets and that's a bad mistake to make," Mronz said.

Wilander will next play American Malivai Washington, a 4-6, 7-6 (9-7), 6-3, 6-3 winner over Austrian Alex Antonitsch.

Wilander and Edberg were joined in the fourth-round by compatriot Lars Jonsson, but another two Swedes — Henrik Holm and Jonas Svensson — fell by the wayside.

Jonsson, ranked 134th in the world, upset ill-tempered and then disgraced No. 14 seed Karel Novacek of the Czech republic 6-1, 7-5, 7-5.

Jonsson, 23, advanced to the fourth round of a Grand Slam for the first time in 15 attempts. He'd lost in the first round of the Australian Open for the last three years.

Jonsson was the lowest-ranked player to gain acceptance to the main draw and let out a wild yell after clinching victory.

"This is the best moment of my tennis career," said the 23-year-old journeyman.

Russian left-hander Alexander Volkov, seeded 12th, outlasted Holm in his third-round match. Volkov beat Holm 7-5, 2-6, 4-6, 6-3, 6-4.

Holm has played four five-set matches in his career — and lost all but one.

American Todd Martin, seeded ninth, ousted Svensson 6-1, 5-7, 6-2, 6-2.

Thomas Muster of Austria,

seeded sixth, advanced with a 6-3, 6-3, 6-2 win over ragged Frenchman Guil Raoux that took just four, 34 minutes.

Muster, who yet to drop a set, now play Volkov in a fourth-round meeting of two left-handers.

No. 2 seed Arantxa Sanchez Vicario of Spain easily defeated American Ann Grossman 6-2, 6-3, while Gabriela Sabatini and Jana Novotna both moved effortlessly into the fourth round of the women's singles.

Sabatini, the fourth seed from Argentina, beat Linda Ferrando of Italy 6-2, 6-1 and No. 5 seed Novotna, of the Czech republic, beat Jane Taylor of Australia 6-4, 6-2.

Manuela Maleeva-Fragniere, playing the final Grand Slam of her career before retiring next month, moved on with a 6-0, 6-1 win over Romana Tedjakusuma of Indonesia.

The 26-year-old from Switzerland has been a top 10 player for the past decade but wants to start a family.

Maleeva-Fragniere now plays German Sabine Hack, a 6-3, 3-6, 7-5 winner over Beate Reinstadler of Austria.

Mary Pierce of France, the No. 9 seed, was totally businesslike against Sabine Appelmans of Belgium, using her deep groundstrokes to advance in just 66 minutes.

Pierce hit 25 outright winners to only 11 from Appelmans and won the point 12 of the 15 times she advanced to the net.

"I feel I'm playing pretty well, but I'm not moving as well as I would like," said Pierce, who now plays Sabatini.

Canadian-born Pierce said new coach Nick Bollettieri has improved her mental approach. Bollettieri also has coached Andre Agassi, Jim Courier and Monica Seles.

"He's taught me to relax, and when I do I play better," Pierce said.

Magdalena Maleeva of Bulgaria, seeded 14th, beat Elena Likhovtseva of Kazakhstan 6-4, 6-2.

Emotional Old Trafford pays homage to Busby

LONDON (AFP) — English soccer had an emotional day Saturday as supporters at Old Trafford and all over the country paid tribute to Manchester United's legendary former manager, Matt Busby.

Busby, who died aged 84 Thursday, was commemorated by a minute's silence before every league match.

At Old Trafford, the ground Busby turned into a shrine of attacking soccer a crowd of almost 45,000 many of them in tears, stood and turned to the one empty seat in a packed stadium.

Seat B122, the seat where Busby would sit to watch home games remained tipped up with two black ribbons tied to its

red arm-rests. Its name plaque read simply — "Sir Matt."

The current United side, the first able to stand any comparison with the 1968 team, marked Busby's passing in appropriate style with a stylish 1-0 victory over Everton that took them another step closer to retaining their title.

With second-placed Blackburn entertaining Leeds Sunday, the victory put Alex Ferguson's side 16 points clear at the top, with only 16 games left to play.

Fittingly it was Ryan Giggs, the exhilarating winger who more than any current United player embodies the Busby

tradition, who got the winner.

Giggs' 27th minute header was his 10 goal of the season and fourth in his last five games.

Third-placed Newcastle United's bid for the title was virtually killed off by a stunning Matthew Le Tissier free-kick six minutes from time at St James' Park.

Le Tissier's strike gave the struggling Saints and new manager Alan Ball an invaluable 2-1 victory.

They now trail United by 18 points.

Sheffield Wednesday boosted their bid for a European place with victory in the

derby match with Sheffield United, thanks to a three-goal burst early in the second half.

Mark Bright started the rout with his eighth goal in ten games. Defender Andy Pearce headed his third in a week three minutes later and Gordon Watson killed off United in the 70th minute.

Dane Whitehouse got a late consolation for United from the penalty spot but that will bring little cheer to a side now only one place above the relegation zone.

Manchester city dropped into the bottom three after letting a three-minute lead slip against Liverpool at Anfield.

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STAY CALM
Both vulnerable. North deals.
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♠ 9
♥ K J 10 9
♦ Q 8 3
♣ A K 9 6 5
EAST
♠ 8 6 4
♥ 10 7 3
♦ 7 6 5 4 3
♣ J 6 5 4 2
SOUTH
♠ A K 5 2
♥ A Q 8 2
♦ A 9
♣ 3 2
The bidding:
North East South West
1♣ Pass 1♥ Pass
2♥ Pass 4NT Pass
5♣ Pass 5NT Pass
7♥ Pass Pass Pass
Opening lead: Four of ♣
The immediate reaction by most declarers to a terrible trump break is blind panic. It is far more sensible to cast about for a way to overcome this misfortune.
North-South bid superbly to a sound grand slam. Since South was going to be played, the one-hand response has our endorsement despite the 20 high-card points. Once North raised, South leaped directly to Blackwood. When South announced possession of all the aces

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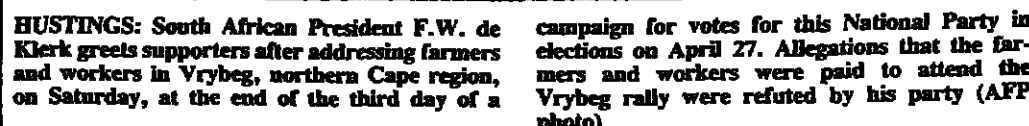
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OSLO (AP) — Israel's Foreign Minister Shimon Peres, out on stroll Saturday before the funeral of Foreign Minister Johan Holst, popped into a book store on Oslo's main street. Suddenly there was this crowd of security people and journalists," said Ingrid Ryvarden, a 23-year-old student who works at the bookstore on Saturdays. "I knew it was a big person." Ms. Ryvarden said the Israeli foreign minister stood for 10 or 15 minutes, studying, among other things, a map pins from next month's Winter Olympics in the Norwegian town of Lillehammer. But one thing especially caught Mr. Peres' eye, a copy of the Norwegian edition of his own book, "The New Middle East" with his picture on the cover. Ms. Ryvarden said she thought he might not be allowed to buy anything, because it was Saturday, the Jewish Sabbath. "So I gave it to him, even though he won't be able to read it," she said.



car with curtained windows, escorted by a phalanx of cars, they corroborate and issue orders for their followers inside Egypt.

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